UNIVERSITY OF ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE
3 1761 04338 7570

ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE
LIBRARY

The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the Souls of the Just

ACCORDING TO THE TEACHING
OF ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

By

REV. FATHER BARTHÉLEMY FROGET

Master in Theology, of the Order of Preachers

Translated from the Third
French Edition

By REV. SYDNEY A. RAEMERS, M.A.





THE NEWMAN PRESS
Westminster, Maryland
1952

Second Printing, 1952

Imprimatur:

FR. JOS. AMBROSIUS LABORÉ, ORD. PRÆD.,
Prior Provincialis, Prov. Lugd.

Imprimatur:

Parisiis, 14 Februarius, 1900.
E. THOMAS, V.G.



MAY 18 1954

Nihil Obstat:

ARTHUR J. SCANLAN, S.T.D.
Censor Librorum

Imprimatur:

✠ PATRICK J. HAYES, D. D.
Archbishop of New York

New York, *October 7, 1921.*

All rights reserved

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

APPROBATION OF THE ORDER OF PREACHERS

We, the undersigned, have examined, by appointment of the Very Reverend Father Provincial, the book, already published under the title: *The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the Souls of the Just, by the Very Rev. Father Master, Brother Barthélemy Froget, of the Order of the Preaching Brothers.* This work being very praiseworthy on account of the solidity of its doctrine and by its conformity with the teachings of St. Thomas, has won the attention of theologians. Having thus advanced the progress of sacred science, it may furthermore contribute to the increase of piety in men's souls. It has seemed to us worthy to be republished, and we affirm our approval of the new impression, with the additions and changes which the author has judged proper to introduce.

Father Marie-Joseph, O.P.,
Master in Sacred Theology.
Father Denys Mezard, O.P.

Lyons, the Feast of St. Raymond de Pennafort, the 23d of January, 1900.

LETTER OF HIS EMINENCE THE CARDINAL ARCHBISHOP OF LYONS

ARCHBISHOP'S RESIDENCE,
Lyons, July 16, 1899.

DEAR FATHER FROGET:

I congratulate you upon having treated in your book one of the most interesting and consoling doctrines of the Christian faith: the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the Souls of the Just.

In the Gospels and in the Epistles there are passages upon this subject which we too often read without penetrating their deeper meaning; and yet these inspired words reveal to us, if deeply pondered, the real grandeur of the Christian soul which is in the state of grace, and its wonderful relations with the Persons of the Holy Trinity.

In our day we study natural psychology with minute care, but we neglect what may be called supernatural psychology, namely, the energies, the actions, and the beauties of the soul which the Holy Spirit sanctifies by His indwelling and His mysterious activities. The Apostle, St. Paul, has traced the great outlines of this admirable science; the holy Fathers, particularly St. Augustine, have developed it by their learned commentaries.

These truths you have presented with the exactness born of your profound knowledge of the theology of St. Thomas Aquinas, and with such remarkable clarity, that your work will be appreciated not only by ecclesiastics, but also by those members of the laity who are eager for a better knowledge of our holy religion.

Therefore, I am glad to recommend your book to all classes of the faithful; and, whilst expressing to you my sentiments of respect and devotedness, I beg Our Saviour to bestow His blessing upon your labors and upon your apostolic ministry.

✠PIERRE CARD. COULLIE,

Archbishop of Lyons and Vienne.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

THE Sovereign Pontiff, Leo XIII., in his admirable Encyclical, *Divinum illud munus*, addressed to the entire Catholic world under date of May 9, 1897, expresses his ardent desire to see faith in the august ministry of the Trinity revived in men's souls, and piety towards the Holy Ghost increased in their hearts. To this end he drew the attention of the Faithful to the presence of the Holy Spirit, His wonderful power, as well as His activity, throughout the Church; and also in the soul of each of the Faithful, imparting the abundance of His celestial Gifts. Furthermore, the Vicar of Jesus Christ reminded Catholic preachers and others who have charge of souls, of the duty incumbent on them to explain carefully, and with clearness and completeness, all that relates to the Holy Spirit, avoiding difficult and subtle controversies, and taking special pains to treat of the innumerable benefits we have received from Him and do constantly receive; so that, as the Holy Father added, ignorance and error about these sublime things may be expelled from the minds of the faithful, who are so rightly called "the children of light" (Ephesians v. 8).

Words as wise as they are opportune. As a matter of fact, how many Christians of our day have any notion, however vague and imperfect, about the Holy Spirit, His Gifts, His wondrous works in the souls of men, the spiritual riches and joys which He lavishes upon whomsoever shows himself docile to His inspirations? "Perhaps," insists Leo XIII., "it would not be impossible even in this our era, to come across Catholic Christians, who, if questioned, as were the proselytes of old by the Apostle, whether or not they had

received the Holy Ghost, would answer in the same words: 'We have not so much as heard whether there be a Holy Ghost'" (Acts xix. 2). At any rate, there are many who are either entirely ignorant or have but a very superficial knowledge about Him, and thereby, to a certain extent, fall short of the fruits of their religion, lacking the knowledge of that truth so beautiful and so consoling—His invisible sending and His indwelling in souls in the state of grace. And yet what can be more worthy of their deepest attention? Is not this God's supreme Gift, the chief Gift and the crowning Gift of all—God Himself coming within us, giving Himself to us, making Himself our Guest infinitely sweet, our Friend, our Consoler, the active principle of our sanctification, and the pledge of our eternal happiness, nay, its very origin? Is this not the supremely important subject of a reasonable being's thought, the object of his most passionate devotion?

After having raised to the true God a splendid temple full of golden glory, King Solomon cried to heaven in accents of living faith and deepest wonder: "Is it then to be thought that God should indeed dwell upon earth? for if heaven and the heavens of heavens cannot contain Thee, how much less this house which I have built?" (3 Kings viii. 27.) If such was the amazement of the wisest of mankind at God's entrance into a material temple, what should be the sentiments of a man in whose very soul God makes His abode as in a living temple—the infinite Majesty of the Deity, the Creator of heaven and earth, the Master of the universe! Now, it is not merely a pious opinion, an affirmation more or less open to discussion, but it is a truth wholly beyond dispute, that God, by His grace dwells veritably—His actual substantial self—in the unity of His Nature and the Trinity of His Persons, in each and every just soul, and that a bond of love unites the soul to its Creator more intimately than it can ever be joined here below to its dearest friend; and thus it begins, even in this life, to enjoy God with the inef-

fable sweetness of eternal bliss. Leo XIII., in the Encyclical already quoted, goes so far as even to say that "this marvelous union, which is termed *indwelling*, differs in no wise from the union with God which awaits us in paradise, except in those things which are incidental to our state and condition in our earthly sojourn."

To establish by incontestable arguments drawn from Divine revelation, the actual fact of this special presence of God in righteous souls; clearly to explain its nature, its mode and manner, especially our deification by grace and the adoptive sonship which is its consequence; to give thereby a more perfect comprehension of the dignity of the Christian and of his high destiny; to inspire a more profound appreciation of the supremely precious benefits bestowed on that account upon the just soul at its departure from this life, thus generating a more lively longing for its incomparable heritage reserved in the bliss of heaven; finally, to give a picture of the rich and complex supernatural organism installed by the Holy Ghost in the souls in whom He dwells, permitting them to collaborate with Him and under His guidance in the great work of their sanctification—such is the magnificent programme which we have undertaken to carry out in the present work.

Our first edition has been received with such a welcome as to make us believe that God has deigned to bless our labors, for its success has certainly far transcended our expectations.

This second edition is the exact reproduction of the first, excepting some slight changes, not of matter, but only of arrangement. We have relegated to the end of the volume, in an appendix, some discussions more suitable to theologians than to the general public, suppressing in the interests of peace all polemical matter; and we have added something more about the Gifts of the Holy Ghost the better to impart the thoughts of St. Thomas on that subject.

May the Spirit of God condescend to bless these humble

pages, written wholly for His glory, and to bring forth fruit unto edification. We shall be amply rewarded for our labors if our book shall have helped to spread the knowledge and the love of the Divine Gifts, and shall have served to increase in souls devotion to the Holy Ghost the Sanctifier, and to deepen confidence in Him; that thereby our readers may attain to the realization, in some degree at least, of the will of the common Father of the faithful—their entire sanctification.

INTRODUCTION

An inexhaustible source of study and contemplation, a truth embodying, as it were, the very marrow of Christianity, one frequently alluded to in Holy Writ, yet too rarely touched upon by modern preachers, even when addressing chosen souls whose only desire is to delve deeper and deeper into the mysteries of the kingdom of God, is the sweet and consoling dogma of the indwelling of the Holy Ghost in the souls of the just. This beautiful doctrine, so loved by the Fathers and so often on their lips, in homilies to the faithful and in controversies with opponents of the divinity of the Word and of the Holy Ghost, was reverently treated by the theologians of the Middle Ages, and especially by the greatest among them, that prince of Scholasticism, the Angelic Doctor, St. Thomas Aquinas. St. Thomas, so to speak, made this doctrine his own, and marked it with his seal, by setting it forth with all the precision of theological terminology.

Later, eminent writers, like Gomet, John of St. Thomas, Suarez, the Theologians of Salamanca and other great representatives of ecclesiastical science, set themselves the task of expounding the same doctrine, and fulfilled that task with a love and devotion that lends warmth to the cold letter of their writings. The topic appears in their works like a delightful oasis, in which the reader, somewhat fatigued by the aridity of theological discussions, willingly stops to rest. Petavius and Thomasin adorned it with the treasures of their erudition, citing some of the most striking passages of the Fathers relative to it. In our own day the doctrine

has not been forgotten; on the contrary, it has been restored to prominence by some well-known writers. Cardinals Franzelin and Mazzella, in their learned treatises, Mgr. Gay, in his remarkable conferences on *La Vie et les Vertus Chrétiennes*, and many others have treated the subject with unquestionable talent and varying degrees of success.

Why, then, is this doctrine so little known and so slightly appreciated even by many ministers of the altar? True, they know vaguely, from having heard it enunciated, or from having read it in Holy Writ, that the Holy Ghost, or rather the Three Persons of the Most Holy Trinity, dwell in the souls of those whose blessed fortune it is to be in the state of grace, but in what does this indwelling consist? What differentiates it from the Divine omnipresence? What benefits does it confer on the receiver? What are its effects and consequences? These things they do not know, and it is important that they should know them, else the belief in this point of doctrine, like the faint and uncertain light of a far-distant planet, will be too vague and too obscure to lay hold upon the mind and leave a lasting impression; it will fail to bring forth in the soul those salutary fruits of joy and consolation it is calculated to produce.

Is this truth to be inaccessible to the ordinary reader, a closed book which only a few privileged souls may peruse, since they alone possess the secret of deciphering its characters? Not at all; we hope, with God's grace, to offer an exposition of this doctrine within the reach of all readers. Can anyone say that this is, indeed, a very beautiful teaching, but devoid of practical influence on the conduct of our lives? This certainly is not true; for, though, at first sight, this study may seem to be speculative, it is in reality rich in practical instruc-

tions, and offers to those who fear not to enter upon it, an abundance of real spiritual joys, and powerful incentives to sanctification.

Our purpose, therefore, in publishing these pages, is to place within the reach of men of good will, who, although not versed in theological speculation yet hunger after truth, and are anxious to rise superior to spiritual commonplace, a doctrine which contains our greatest title to glory and nobility. We shall endeavor to conduct this study with all the clearness required by such a lofty subject, taking for our master and guide the great St. Thomas Aquinas, whom the venerable Pontiff, Pope Leo XIII., urges all to study and whose disciple we are proud to acknowledge ourselves. On this question, as upon so many others, the Angelic Doctor has cast the rays of his genius; not that he has treated it with the abundance of detail and fullness of development that we might wish, but he has laid down the principles, in those concise but pregnant sentences which, at almost every step, crystallize his thought in the *Summa Theologica*. With the firm, clear and noble style characteristic of him, he has expressed in comparatively few words, all that need be said to make himself understood, leaving to others the task of opening up his doctrine and placing it by suitable development within the grasp of all minds. This last is the purpose we have in view.

Our task, therefore, will be to place in relief the thought of St. Thomas, and to translate it into a language understood by all.

We shall also take from Holy Writ and the writings of the Fathers many testimonies, which have the double advantage of throwing light upon our teaching and reënforcing it, besides showing the solid foundations on which it rests.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE

APPROBATION OF THE ORDER OF PREACHERS AND OF THE ORDINARY iii
LETTER OF THE CARDINAL ARCHBISHOP OF LYONS . . iv
PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION v
INTRODUCTION ix

PART FIRST

THE ORDINARY PRESENCE OF GOD IN ALL CREATURES

CHAPTER I

The Presence of God in All Creatures as Their Active Principle or Efficient Cause 1

CHAPTER II

How This Common and Ordinary Presence Is Intimate, Profound and Universal. Its Different Degrees . 13

PART SECOND

GOD'S SPECIAL PRESENCE, OR THE INDWELLING OF THE HOLY GHOST IN THE SOULS OF THE JUST

CHAPTER I

The Fact of God's Special Presence in the Just. The Sending and the Bestowal of God the Holy Ghost; His Indwelling in the Soul 26

CHAPTER II

The Nature of This Sanctifying Presence . . . 41

CHAPTER III

The Mode or Manner of This Presence of the Holy Ghost. God Is Present in the Souls of the Just, Not Only as Efficient Cause, But Also as Guest, Friend, and as an Object of Knowledge and Love . . . 55

CHAPTER IV

PAGE

Explanation of the Mode or Manner of Presence With Which God Honors the Just on Earth and the Saints in Heaven. How God Is Present By His Substance to the Understanding and Will of the Blessed in Heaven as First Truth and Sovereign Good 69

CHAPTER V

Explanation of the Special Mode or Manner of Presence With Which God Honors the Just on Earth and the Saints in Heaven (Continued). How Grace Produces in the Souls of the Just on Earth a Divine Presence Analogous to That Enjoyed By the Saints in Heaven 80

PART THIRD

THIS DIVINE INDWELLING BY GRACE IS NOT PROPER TO THE PERSON OF THE HOLY SPIRIT ALONE, BUT IS THE COMMON PREROGATIVE OF THE WHOLE BLESSED TRINITY. IT IS THE PRIVILEGE OF ALL THE JUST BOTH OF THE OLD AND THE NEW TESTAMENT

CHAPTER I

Although Usually Attributed to the Holy Spirit, the Divine Indwelling By Grace Is Not His Exclusive Prerogative, But Is Common to All Three Persons of the Trinity 104

CHAPTER II

The Indwelling of God in Men's Souls Is Not the Exclusive Privilege of the Just of the New Law, But Is the Common Endowment of the Just of All Times 114

PART FOURTH

PURPOSE AND EFFECT OF THE INVISIBLE AND INTERIOR MISSION OF THE HOLY GHOST; AND OF HIS INDWELLING IN MEN'S SOULS

Chapter I

PAGE

Purpose of the Invisible Mission of the Holy Ghost and of His Entrance Into Souls: Sanctification of the Soul; Namely, the Forgiveness of Sins and Justification . 123

Chapter II

Our Justification By Grace Is a Veritable Deification. How Sanctifying Grace Grants an Actual and Formal Participation in the Divine Nature 138

Chapter III

Our Divine Adoptive Sonship. Resemblances and Differences Between Divine and Human Adoption. Incomparability and Dignity of the Christian . . 157

Chapter IV

Our Right to the Divine Inheritance a Consequence of Our Adoption. What Is This Inheritance? . . 170

Chapter V

Effects of the Indwelling of the Holy Ghost. The Infused Virtues, Theological and Moral 188

Chapter VI

Effects of the Indwelling of the Holy Ghost (Continued). The Gifts of the Holy Ghost 203

Chapter VII

Final Effects of the Indwelling of the Holy Ghost. The Fruits of the Holy Spirit, and the Beatitudes . . 229

The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the Souls of the Just

PART FIRST

THE ORDINARY PRESENCE OF GOD IN ALL CREATURES

CHAPTER I

The Presence of God in All Creatures as Their Active Principle or Efficient Cause

Before broaching the interesting yet difficult question of the indwelling of the Holy Ghost in the souls of the just, and of the mysterious union He thus effects with them; before going into the proofs of the presence both substantial and extraordinary of the three Divine persons in the just soul which thus becomes a living temple wherein the adorable Trinity finds delight, it will be useful, and, to a certain extent, even necessary, to grasp a few preliminary notions on the ordinary way in which God is present in all things. Nothing, indeed, could be more unreasonable than to expound the doctrine of the extraordinary or special presence of God in the souls of the just, before we know quite clearly what is His ordinary presence in all creation.

To be in a fit position to speak in precise terms of these two kinds of presence, and to distinguish one

from the other, we must first of all become acquainted with their respective characteristics, and see in what they agree and in what they differ. This may be achieved by carefully examining, defining and comparing their natures. Were we to follow a different course of action, plunging at once into a more or less scientific explanation of the indwelling of God in the soul by the life of grace, without having, at the outset, firmly established and clearly explained that such an indwelling is to be found nowhere else in nature, we should be in danger of imparting very incomplete notions, and of leaving the reader in a state of vagueness that could not but be regrettable. On the other hand, it will not be necessary to dwell at length on the proofs for the divine omnipresence, since all Catholics believe in it; we shall, however, insist on the way in which it is to be understood in order to convey an exact idea of God's immensity, and so to prepare the way for a clear understanding of the special presence of God in the souls of the just.

I

It is a dogma of faith, as well as a truth of reason, that God is everywhere—in heaven, on earth, in all things and in all places: that He is present in a very intimate manner in everything created. This truth is known to all, not only to the philosopher and theologian, but even to the little child whose intelligence is but awakening; it is one of the first lessons it receives at its mother's knee—one of the first truths it learns from any Christian teacher.

This doctrine, which the simplest Christian holds at the beginning of his moral life, and which he continues to hold without always understanding its full bearing, nor suspecting what deep truths it expresses, was

preached long ago by the Apostle St. Paul, before the most illustrious audience in the world. He was addressing, not an ignorant populace, but the official representatives of human wisdom, the members of the Areopagus of Athens, when, referring to the existence of God in every creature, the Apostle exclaimed: "That they should seek God, if haply they may feel after Him or find Him, although He be not far from every one of us; for in Him we live, and move, and are." [1]

Centuries before, the Psalmist had made this same divine omnipresence the theme of his song: "Behold, O Lord, Thou hast known all things, the latest and those of old; Thou hast formed me, and hast laid Thy hand upon me. Thy knowledge has become wonderful to me; it is high, and I cannot reach to it. Whither shall I go from Thy spirit? or whither shall I fly from Thy face? If I ascend into heaven, Thou art there; if I descend into hell, Thou art present. If I take my wings early in the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there also shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me." [2]

Finally, in order fully to convince us that we cannot escape His ever-vigilant eye, God Himself, using our weak human language, with infinite condeseension, says to us through the mouth of His prophet: "Shall a man be hid in secret places, and I not see him, saith the Lord? Do not I fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord?" [3]

It is not necessary to cite other testimonies in proof of a point of doctrine admitted by all who believe in the existence of an infinite Being, the Author of all things; yet, on account of its extreme importance, we should like to set down here the philosophical proof of the omnipresence of God, given by St. Thomas. God, he says, "is present in all things, not as part of their essence, or as an accidental element, but as the active

[1] Acts xvii. 27, 28. [2] Psalm cxxxviii. 5-12. [3] Jeremiah xxiii. 24.

principle is present to the thing on which it acts; for it is essential that the efficient cause be united with the object upon which it exercises an immediate activity, and that it comes into contact with this object, if not bodily, then, at least, by the exercise of its power and energies." [4]

We may compare God's action with that of the sun. Although vastly distant from our planet, it still comes into contact with it through its rays, else how could it give light and heat to the earth? But God works in every created thing, not only through the medium of secondary causes as the sun acts upon the earth, but also in a direct and immediate way, by Himself bringing into existence and preserving in things that which is most intimate and deep-rooted in them, namely, their very being. For, as the characteristic effect of fire is to burn, so the characteristic effect of God, Who is Being itself, is to cause the being of creatures. "And so God is intimately present to all things as their efficient cause—as causing the being of all things." [5]

God, then, is not present to the world like the artisan or the artist; he is external to his work, and does not often touch it in a direct way, but rather through his instruments, or is present to his work when he produces it, but later on withdraws from it without endangering its existence. God is so intimately united to the works of His hands that if, after calling a created thing into being, He should withdraw from it and cease to sustain it, it would immediately fall into the nothingness out of which it was made.

And if you question the Angelic Doctor as to *how* God, an immaterial, unextended and indivisible substance, can be present in all places, and in the inner depths of beings occupying material space, he will answer you with a comparison borrowed from nature and

[4] *Summa Theologica*, I., q. viii., a. 1. [5] *Ibid.*, I., q. viii., a. 1.

already employed by the Fathers, namely: He is present in three ways: "By *His power*, by *His presence*, and by *His essence*. By *His power*, because all things are subject to His sovereign command: He is present everywhere like a king who, while residing in his palace, is by a fiction deemed present in all the parts of his kingdom where he exercises authority. By *His presence*, that is to say most intimately, because He knows all things and sees all things; and nothing, however hidden it may be, can escape His attention; all things are present to Him as objects are said to be in our presence, although they may be situated at a slight distance from our person. Finally by *His essence*, for He is as really and in His very substance present to all created things as a monarch is present in person to the throne on which he is seated." [6]

The reason for this substantial presence of God in His creatures is that not one of them could dispense with the divine action preserving its existence and actuating its operations; and since substance and action are not really distinct in God, it follows that "He is substantially—in His actual reality—present wherever He works, *i. e.*, in all things and in all places." [7]

In his commentary on Peter Lombard's first book of Sentences, St. Thomas explains this threefold presence in slightly different words. Not that it excludes the explanation we have just given, nor that it is in contradiction with it, but it brings out better the thought of the Angelic Doctor relative to the substantial presence of God in His capacity of efficient cause. Here are his words: "God is in created things by *His presence*, inasmuch as He is there in action, for the worker must in some manner be present with his work; and, furthermore, because the Divine operation cannot be separated from the active force from which it flows, it must be

[6] *Summa Theologica*, I., q. viii., a. 3. [7] *Ibid.*, I., q. viii., a. 1.

held that God is present in all things by *His power;* finally, since the force or the power of God is identical with His essence, it follows that God is in all things by *His essence.*" [8] These words are highly significant.

II

There are some theologians who explain the divine omnipresence by saying that God is present everywhere by His essence, because the divine substance, being infinite, fills the heavens and the earth. To them, the immensity of God is a property by which the divine essence is, so to speak, distributed *ad infinitum* in all existing and possible spaces; that is to say, God's omnipresence is the actual diffusion of the divine being, penetrating all real things and places without blending with them. According to this opinion, the divine immensity might be compared to a sea without shores, capable of containing an infinite number of beings of every nature and dimension. Within this sea is a sponge which the waters interpenetrate and then flow over on all sides: a figure of this world, that God's immensity pervades and then flows over on all sides; with this difference, however, that God is wholly in the world and wholly in each of its parts, whereas each portion of the water of the sea occupies a distinct place.

St. Augustine conceived a similar picture of the divine immensity in his early days before his conversion: "So also I thought of Thee, O God, O Life of my life," he says in his *Confessions,* "so also I thought of Thee, as stretched out through infinite spaces, interpenetrating the whole mass of the world, reaching out beyond in all directions to immensity without end, so that sea, sky, all things are full of Thee, limited in Thee, while Thou art not limited at all. As the body of the air above the earth does not bar the passage of the light of the sun,

[8] St. Thomas, *Sententiæ,* dist. XXXVII., q. i., a. 2.

but the light penetrates the air, not bursting or dividing it, but filling it—in the same way, I thought, the body of heaven, and air, and sea, and even of earth was all pervious to Thee, penetrable in all its parts great or small, so that it can admit the hidden interjection of Thy presence, which from within or from without orders all things that Thou hast created. This was my fancy, for I could shape no other; yet it was false. For in that way a greater part of the earth would contain a greater part of Thee, a less part a less. All things would be full of Thee in such a sense that there would be more of thee in the elephant than in the sparrow, inasmuch as one is larger than the other, and fills a wider space. And thus Thou wouldst unite Thy limbs piecemeal with the limbs of the world, the great with the great, the small with the small. This is not Thy nature, but as yet Thou hadst not lightened my darkness."[9]

Further on, speaking on the same subject, he adds: "I marshaled before the sight of my spirit all creation, all that we see, earth, and sea, and air, and stars, and trees, and animals; all that we do not see, the firmament of the sky above, and all angels, and all spiritual things; for these also, as if they were bodies, did my imagination arrange in this place or in that. I pictured to myself Thy creation as one vast mass, composed of various kinds of bodies, some real bodies, some those which I imagined in place of spirits. I pictured this mass as vast, not indeed in its true dimensions, for these I could not know, but as large as I chose to think, only finite on every side. And Thee, O Lord, I conceived as lapping it round and interpenetrating it everywhere, but as being infinite in every direction; as if there were sea everywhere, and everywhere through measureless space nothing but illimitable sea, and within this a sponge, huge, but yet finite; the sponge would be pervaded through all

[9] St. Augustine, *Confessions*, I., vii., c. 1. Bigg's translation.

its particles by the infinite sea. In this way, I pictured Thy finite creation, as filled with Thy infinity."[10]

After his conversion and accession to the episcopal see of Hippo, Augustine's language is entirely different: "When we say that God is everywhere we must withdraw from our mind every grossness of thought, and disengage ourselves from sensible images, lest we should imagine God as diffused everywhere, like some greatness spreading itself in space, as does the earth, the sea, the air or light; for all such things are less in one of their parts than in the whole; but we rather should conceive God's greatness as we think of great wisdom in a man who happens to be of small stature."[11]

The notion of the diffusion and expansion of God's being, was entirely disapproved by St. Augustine, and dealt with by him as a carnal conception to be rejected. The advocates of such a theory do not, it is true, fall into Augustine's error whilst he was a Manichean, of supposing that a greater part of the earth can contain a greater part of the divine substance; for they know and teach that a pure spirit being indivisible and without parts does not occupy space like earthly bodies, but can be wholly in the whole being and wholly in each and every part of that being. They do, however, seem to share the ideas of Augustine's pre-conversion days, but which he reformed later, in the general trend of their argument and in the manner in which they conceive of the divine ubiquity.

Far more spiritual, and therefore much more in accordance with the divine nature, is the notion of God's immensity given by St. Thomas. Instead of admitting, with the advocates of the theory we are now refuting, a *kind* of diffusion of the divine substance, so that God

[10] *Ibid.*, I., vii., c. 5.

[11] St. Augustine, *lib. de Præsentiâ Dei, seu Epist. ad Dardanum*, 187, c. iv., n. 11.

would still be in His most real substance present to created things scattered through space, even though by an impossibility His action exercised no influence upon them, the Angelic Doctor teaches that the formal reason of God's presence in all created things is none other than His infinite activity and operation, just as the reason of His immensity is His omnipotence.

The Divine substance occupies no determined space, either great or small; it does not need space to display itself, and enters into no relation of proximity or remoteness with beings that exist in space. If we speak of a relation of the Divine substance with these beings, we mean only a relation of power and operation; *i. e.*, God is intimately present to all things because He produces and preserves the being of all things: "God is not determined to space great or small by *the necessity of His essence*, as if He need be present in any place, since He is from all eternity before all place; but by the immensity of His power He reaches into all things which are in place, *because He is the universal cause of being*. Thus He is wholly wheresoever He is, because by His simple power He reaches into all things."[12] If then God is present in all places and in all creatures, it is because no actual space and no created being can escape His direct and immediate influence, for His power, and consequently His substance, reaches out to them all.[13]

III

Theologians, as we have seen, often explain God's omnipresence by saying that He is present everywhere because of His immensity. St. Thomas uses a different term. According to him, God is present everywhere in the capacity of efficient cause, *per modum causæ*.[14] Such

[12] St. Thomas, L., iii., *Contra Gent.*, lxviii.
[13] *Summa Theologica*, Ia., q. cxii., a. 1. [14] *Ibid.*, I., q. viii., a. 3.

an expression is profound and full of meaning, for it banishes from the mind any idea of a diffusion or expansion of the Divine substance, at the same time marking out the Divine operation as the basis of the relations existing between God and His creatures. Yet the expression was not a new one, and St. Thomas is not giving a purely personal opinion; here as ever he shows himself to be the faithful echo of tradition.

And, as we have already noticed, St. Augustine declared that God was in the world as the efficient cause of the world, "as the presence of the One by Whom the world was created; as the artisan is present to the work he handles." [15] If, therefore, God fills the heavens and the earth, it is by the presence and exercise of His power and not by the necessity of His nature,[16] for God's greatness is one of power and not of bulk. St. Thomas seems manifestly to have taken his inspiration from these different passages.[17]

St. Fulgentius, a disciple of St. Augustine, speaks in much the same terms as his master.[18] Likewise, St. Gregory of Nyssa.[19]

That the basis for the presence of God by very substance in all created things is the divine activity, can be clearly seen from all these passages, and from many others we could easily adduce. An earthly body is present in the place it occupies neither by its action nor even directly by its substance, but by its dimensions, by the contact of its parts with the parts of the body surrounding and containing it; since, therefore, it is quantity that gives parts and dimensions to a body and enables it to come into contact with another body and to occupy a determined part of space, such or such a body

[15] St. Augustine, in *Evang. Joan.*, tract 2, n. 10.
[16] *Ibid.*, *De Civit. Dei*, 1, vii., c. xxx.
[17] St. Thomas, *Contra Gent.*, 1, III., c. lxviii.
[18] St. Fulgentius, l. ii., *ad Trasim.*, c. xi.
[19] St. Gregory of Nyssa, *lib. De Anima.*

is, properly speaking, present in space by its quantity: *per quantitatem dimensivam.*

Far different is the way in which a spirit is present in space. As it is a simple, that is to say, an indivisible substance and without parts, it cannot of itself occupy any space, either great or small, and does not need space to display itself. If, however, a spirit wishes to enter into relation with a place or with the things present in that place, it can do so by the exercise of its activities and its energies. Hence the proposition, looked upon as an axiom by all Scholastics: spirits are present in space by contact of power—*per contactum virtutis.*[20]

What, therefore, quantity is to bodies—*i. e.*, a property distinct from their substance and extending it through space—active power is to spirits, which it places in contact with space and the things situated in space.[21]

This is why St. Thomas, when asking the question whether ubiquity is a property becoming God from all eternity, *utrum esse ubique conveniat Deo ab æterno,* instead of answering, like some theologians, that God is not, of course, present from all eternity *to* things which did not as yet exist, but that His substance is, nevertheless, really and eternally present in the spaces which the different created beings are to occupy in time, answers "that the Divinity is present only temporarily in created things according as by His creative act He is present by His power during their temporary existence."[22]

And if you question the Fathers as to where God was before the creation of the world, instead of answering that He was in these incommensurable spaces occupied by the present universe, spaces which thousands of

[20] St. Thomas, *Contra Gent.*, 1, III., c. lxviii.
[21] *Ibid.*, *Summa Theologica*, I., q. viii., a. 2, ad. 1.
[22] *Ibid.*, *Sententiæ*, 1, I., dist. xxxvii., q. ii., a. 3.

other worlds far greater than ours could not fill, they will answer you differently, saying through the mouth of St. Bernard: "We need not trouble to ask where He was, for besides Him nothing existed, and He was then in Himself alone." [23]

Hence, to summarize, in the mind of St. Thomas and the Fathers of the Church, the basic reason, the true ground, the definitive "why" of the presence of God in creatures is the divine operation, formally immanent, since it neither issues forth from, nor is even distinct from, the principle whence it emanates, yet producing outward created effects and, therefore, called "virtually transitive," *virtualiter transiens.*

[23] St. Bernard, *De Consider.*, 1, V., cap. vi.

CHAPTER II

How This Common and Ordinary Presence is Intimate, Profound and Universal. Its Different Degrees

I

It is difficult for us to conceive and far more difficult to express, how intimate, profound and universal is the common and ordinary presence of God in all things. We know directly and immediately only created causes; and however efficacious their action, it is always limited. The created cause modifies and transforms the object upon which it exercises its activity, *operatur transmutando;* it never creates. Hence there is something which it leaves untouched in the depths of the being it works upon, which it does not bring forth and consequently to which it has not been present. A sculptor, for example, may be able to carve from a rough block of wood or marble a masterpiece, which will be an object for the admiration not only of his contemporaries, but also of remotest posterity; yet however powerful and creative his genius, before he can give outward expression to the ideal conceived in the secret of his mind, he will require a material substance upon which to exercise his chisel, a substance whose existence he takes for granted, but does not produce. The soul itself supposes the existence of the body, which is the matter it informs, and which is extraneous to it, notwithstanding the fact that the soul is so very intimately united with the body in the capacity of its substantial form. It communicates to the body its life, sensation and action,

and forms with it one single substance, yet the body by no means comes from it by creation.

Such barriers are unknown to the Divine causality; it is universal and reaches out to every place and thing: substances, faculties, habits, operations, everything that is real and positive comes from it, is its work—all except evil and sin. Without the Divine causality nothing can come into existence; without it, nothing can continue to exist, without God, of Whom it is said that He upholdeth "all things by the word of His power." [1] Again, without His actual and immediate influence, no created agent can act: "Lord, Thou hast wrought all our works for us;" [2] even our free will cannot escape His almighty action: "For it is God Who worketh in you both to will and to accomplish, according to His good will." [3] God then is present everywhere as the First Cause—in the centre, in the radius, and in the circumference of every being.

Whatever be the nature of the effect produced; whatever be the order to which this effect belongs; be it an inanimate or animate being, a soul to be created, to be preserved, to be justified, a natural or supernatural gift to be conferred, a faculty to be set in action; in a word, as soon as we have anywhere an effect of the Divine causality, there we are sure to find God in His very self in the capacity of active principle.[4]

This mode of the presence of God, common to every being and the same everywhere substantially, has, nevertheless, many degrees, according to the number and the excellence of the effects produced, or, rather, according to the varying measure in which each creature shares in the Divine perfection. Thus as efficient cause God is present in a more perfect and complete way in the world of spirits than in that of bodies; He is more

[1] Hebrews i. 3. [2] Isaias xxvi. 12. [3] Philippians ii. 13.
[4] St. Thomas, *Contra Gent.*, 1, IV., c. xxi.

present to the angels than to men; to rational and living beings than to irrational ones, and those deprived of life; to the just than to sinners.

This is the clear teaching of Pope St. Gregory the Great: "God is everywhere, and whole and entire everywhere, for He is in contact with all things, even though He has for different things a different contact. With insensible creatures it is a contact which gives being without life; with animals His contact gives being, life and sensation, without intelligence; with human and angelic natures, His contact is such as to give at once being, life, sensation and intelligence; and thus, although He is always the self-same God, yet He is in contact divinely with creatures mutually unlike one another." [5]

St. Fulgentius says: "God is not similarly present in all things; for although He is present everywhere by His power, He is by no means present everywhere by His grace." [6] And St. Bernard: "God Who is everywhere, and equally so by His simple substance, is notwithstanding present with reasonable creatures differently than with others; He is also present in the good, differently than in the bad. So also He is present in unintelligent creatures in such a manner, that they do not attain to possess Him, as reasonable beings may by their knowledge; but only good ones may possess Him by love, in whom alone He is present by union of will." [7]

II

How can we arrive at an idea of these different grades of God's presence? If the Divine substance were extended and divisible, we might understand how it could

[5] St. Gregory, in *Ezech.*, lib. I., Hom. viii., n. 16.
[6] *Ad Trasim.*, I., II., c. viii.
[7] St. Bernard, Hom. iii., super Evang., *Missus est.*

be present in this and that object, in proportions varying as do the things themselves, to a greater degree in larger beings, and to a lesser in smaller ones. St. Thomas furnishes us with a solution of this problem, when he says: "There is one common and ordinary mode of presence, according to which God is present in all things by His essence, His power and His presence, namely, as the cause is present in the effects which participate in His goodness." [8] To understand the meaning and the force of these words, we must recall a beautiful doctrine borrowed by the Angel of the Schools from the Greek Fathers, particularly from St. Dionysius, who had himself taken it from the writings of Plato.

According to Plato's teachings, and they coincide on this point with the teachings of Faith, every created being is a participation in the Divine being, and every created perfection is in some manner a participation in infinite perfection. Thus our nature is a participation in the Divine perfection; [9] the light of our intelligence is a participation in the uncreated intelligence; our life, a participation in the life of God. Briefly, every particle of goodness, of perfection, of being in any creature whatsoever, is a participation in the being and goodness of God.[10]

We must not conceive this communication of God to His creatures as a division of the Divine essence, just as one divides and distributes the parts of a fruit; rather, the Divine essence preserves its unity and fullness. Nor should we regard it as an emanation properly so-called, or a flowing out, an effusion of the Divine substance as rivulets flow from a single source, or as a warm body sheds its rays and heat upon everything

[8] St. Thomas, *Summa Theologica*, I., q. xliii., a. 3.
[9] *Ibid.*, *Summa Theologica*, I., q. xiv., a. 6.
[10] *Ibid.*, *Summa Theologica*, I., q. xii., a. 11, ad. 3; and I., q. vi., a. 4.

that is near. The Divine goodness externizes itself by producing beings like unto itself, yet without any diminution of the Divine substance; [11] for only its likeness is imparted to creatures. The process is akin to the impression of the seal on the wax, without any communication of the former's substance to the latter.

Hence this participation of creatures in the Divine goodness is not any *community* of being and perfection. Such a doctrine is pantheistic. Creatures have their own being, and their own goodness, which is at once the intrinsic and the formal cause, making them what they are. They are related to God inasmuch as God is their extrinsic cause, and this in a threefold sense, namely, the ideal according to which they have been created; the efficient cause; and the final and ultimate cause of their creation.[12]

Not without reason then did the Fathers, and, under their influence, St. Thomas, speak of creatures as beings by participation, *entia per participationem*, and of their perfections as participated perfections. In so speaking they had a twofold purpose; first, clearly to establish the profound difference between the Creator and creature, or rather the abyss which separates them; second, to impress upon men the fact, that every created being essentially depends on God as upon its exemplar and its efficient cause of existence. Indeed, the very words, *participated being*, signify a being that is finite, limited, restricted; for participation in anythng, a family heritage, for example, means to take a part and not have entire possession. The same words further imply a borrowed being, a contingent being, a being proceeding from another being, and essentially depending upon some extrinsic cause. From the very fact that a thing is not being itself in all its plenitude—the ocean

[11] St. Thomas, *Comment in lib. de divinis Nom.*, c. II., lect. 6.
[12] *Ibid.*, *Summa Theologica*, I., q. vi., a. 4.

of being—but a mere rivulet or stream, it follows that what it possesses of being is not its own in virtue even of its essence, but comes to it from without, just as every tiny stream supposes a generating spring or fountain.

In speaking of creatures, then, as *entities participating* of the deity, we wish to assert two truths: first, creatures do not possess being in all its fullness, but have merely a part of it, varying among themselves in quantity if you will, but essentially limited and restricted; secondly, this limited and restricted being does not accrue to them in any essential manner, even in virtue of their nature, but has been communicated to them by an extrinsic cause—God. In much the same way to the glowing steel has been imparted warmth and brilliancy by the operation of an outside agency, not because its nature demands it, but because it is igneous only by participation.

The Divine being, on the contrary, is not a borrowed being, a being proceeding from another. God holds His being from no one, for He has it by virtue of His nature. "He is, then, self-existent being *Ens per se*, being by essence, *Ens per essentiam*, in opposition to being that is contingent and dependent on another—*Ens ab alio, ens per participationem.* He is also preëminent being, self-subsistent, *ipsum esse per se subsistens*, and consequently He is infinite being, the very plenitude of being, *ipsa plenitudo essendi.* And if He is being in all its fullness, nothing can exist beyond Him, which is not traceable to Him as to its source, and which is not present in Him in a supereminent manner. Thus whatever being is outside of Him cannot be called simply *being (ipsum esse simpliciter)*, rather they are *beings*—that is to say, participations in and imitations of being, *entia per participationem.*" [13]

[13] St. Thomas, *Contra Gent.*, 1, II., c. xv.

What we have said of being should be applied to all the other perfections as well. All that God is, He is by Himself, by His essence, and consequently without measure. Hence He is not merely intelligent, wise, good, loving, powerful; He is intelligence and wisdom itself, infinite goodness and love and power, the source of all understanding and goodness. On the contrary, the creature can well be intelligent, wise, good and powerful, but is not intelligence itself, nor wisdom, nor love. Its perfections do not constitute its essence, but are simply either its powers, or properties, or operations, distinct from its essence, and limited as is the latter. In a word, these are participated perfections.

III

After the foregoing explanation it will not be difficult to understand the Angelic Doctor, when he says that God is in all things, as *the cause is in the effects which participate in the causal goodness.* This is but another way of saying that God is present to creatures as efficient cause, first, by His operation, for it is requisite that every principle or cause of action shall enjoy immediate contact with the object of its action; and then by reason of His benefits, which constitute the purpose of His operation; namely, by the created, finite contingent, communicated perfection which He communicates to creatures of this world as so many remote imitations, imperfect copies or analogical participations in the Divine Essence. Indeed, it is the peculiar quality of an efficient cause to communicate more or less of the perfection of its own self with its effects, and to be not only in forceful contact with them at the first moment and during the continuance of its operation, but even to transmit to them its own similitude. It is even natural to an efficient cause to produce something

which resembles itself, and the perfection of the effect is none other than a reproduction of and participation in and resemblance to the perfection of the cause. "That which is in God perfectly, is found in other things by a certain deficient participation." [14]

God, then, is the universal Cause of all existence, for all the beings of the world are the effects of His power. "All, then, must possess something of God within themselves, not any portion of His substance, but a likeness of and participation in His goodness," after the manner of a foot-print or image.[15] Moveover, since the effects of the Divine activity are different in different creatures, and the Divine benefits are far from being equally distributed—whether we consider the order of nature or of grace—it follows that those which have a greater share in the blessings of the Creator are by that very fact nearer and more united to God and richer in their possession of Him. In turn, "God as active principle, exists more perfectly in those creatures which are more indebted to His munificence, for as He is present directly and immediately by virtue of His activity, He is consequently more closely united to the beings in whom He has worked the greatest things." [16] If God's *substance*, so simple and single and indivisible, knowing neither separation nor division, cannot be anywhere unless it be there entirely, it is not the same with His operation and His all-embracing *power*, which, while free to realize itself externally in the measure it judges right, is brought by a multitude of ways into contact with different creatures.

Our own soul may furnish an analogy. While it is in its substance entirely present in the whole body and in each part, it is nevertheless more specially and fully

[14] St. Thomas, *Contra Gent.*, 1, I., ch. xxix.
[15] *Ibid.*, *In Epist. ad Colos.*, c. ii., lect. 2.
[16] *Ibid.*, *Opusc.* 2 (alias 3) *ad cantorem Antioch*, c. vi.

and perfectly united to the head, the seat of all the senses, than to the rest of the organism. This is easily explained. In order to perform the functions of the many faculties with which it is endowed, the soul needs a variety of organs, all of which are not met with throughout all the body, but are found united only in the head. In all truth, we can say that, although "the soul is present entirely and substantially in the whole body, and in each part, it is, however, by its power, more chiefly and excellently present in the brain," as St. Bernard has said.[17]

It can now be understood how, notwithstanding His perfectly indivisible simplicity, God can be here more than there; and how His presence as an efficient cause, though formally and specifically the same everywhere, can, when considered in its extension, vary, so to say, infinitely according to the very measure of the Divine activity. In this sense His presence is more complete, more excellent, and more perfect where the results of His activity are more multiplied and of a higher nature, while it decreases in the same measure as the effects of His Divine power are more remote from the perfection of the cause which produced them. This accounts for the saying, that some beings are near to God while others are far from Him. Here it is question not of a material or local relation, but of a likeness or unlikeness of nature or of grace. Thus, the angels—brightest mirrors of the Divinity, *mundissima Divinitatis specula,* as St. Dionysius calls them—dwell, as it were, in the very vestibule of the adorable Trinity, because, being the most perfect of creatures, they are nearer to God.[18] Material beings, on the contrary, are relegated to the lowest grade of creation, and thus are further away from God because of the unlikeness of their na-

[17] St. Bernard, sermon 1 in Ps. *Qui habitat.*

[18] St. Dionysius, *De divin. nomin.*, ch. v.

ture to His. Man, being made of both spirit and matter, holds the middle place between these two classes of beings. Although less united to God than the pure spirits, he having a soul, is incomparably nearer to Him than are irrational creatures who have not the power to lift themselves up to their Creator by knowledge and love. This is why it is said that man was created to the image and likeness of God,[19] whereas only a vestige of the Divinity is to be found in animals, plants, and inorganic beings.

Still further below the material world is the place occupied by the sinner, because of his *moral* unlikeness to God. Of him alone does Holy Writ speak when it says that the Lord is far from the wicked.[20] St. Augustine, speaking of his sinful life, says of his own previous state of sinfulness: "I was then far off in the region of unlikeness." [21] Such words have become current in Christian speech. Talking about a person, who, for a long time has been neglectful of his religious duties, and who wallows in sin, we say: "He lives far from God." But let him begin to show better dispositions, and then we say: "He is drawing nearer to God." These expressions are most appropriate; for, according to St. Prosper: "It is not in passing over space that we come nearer to God or go farther from Him, but it is by similarity or dissimilarity to Him." [22]

IV

Although, therefore, God is everywhere and *wholly* present in every place, He is not *equally* present everywhere. There are certain places where He dwells in such a particular manner that one might call these places the home or dwelling house of God. It is in these

[19] Genesis i. 26. [20] Proverbs xv. 29.
[21] St. Augustine, *Confessions* 1, VII., ch. x.
[22] St. Prosper, *Sentent.*, 123.

privileged spots, according to St. John Damascene, that the Divine operation is most manifest.[23] Such was the spot, in days of yore, where Jehovah was pleased to reveal himself to Jacob in wondrous visions, and called by him "the house of God and the gate of heaven." [24] Again, at the sight of the miracles performed in his favor, and of the mystical ladder between earth and heaven which he beheld in a dream, as well as in the marvelous promises made to him by the God of his fathers, the holy patriarch recognized a special presence of the Divinity even in the heart of the desert. Under the old law, God dwelt in a special way in the tabernacle built by Moses, and later in the temple of Jerusalem, where His presence was made manifest under the form of a mysterious cloud.

Finally, how can we fail to recognize a special presence of the Divinity (were it only as the efficient Cause), in the prophets to whose minds the Holy Ghost unveiled the future, and in the other inspired writers, as well as in the Apostles whom He assisted and enlightened; in the saints, who receive more abundant graces; in the Church, which He safeguards from error, sanctifies and defends against her enemies: in a word, wheresoever His operation is more plainly felt, wheresoever His favors are distributed more lavishly, in the natural order as well as in the order of grace. And because it is in heaven that God's action displays itself with the greatest splendor, because it is there that His Divine bounty becomes, as it were, forgetful of all limitation—it is there, according to St. Bernard, that God is present in so special a manner, that by comparison in other places He is not present at all. This is why we pray in the Lord's prayer: "Our Father, Who *art in heaven*." [25]

[23] St. John Damascene, *De fido orthod.*, 1, I., ch. xvi.
[24] Genesis xxviii. 17.
[25] St. Bernard, in Ps. *Qui habitat*, sermon I., n. 4.

What are we to conclude from all this, save that God is present in all beings and in all places, not as the liquid in the vessel that contains it, since God cannot be contained by creatures, but rather that it is He Who contains them by preserving them; nor as a constituent element of these creatures as the soul is present to the body, for this would be Pantheism; but as the cause and as the active principle is present to the object upon which it exerts an immediate influence. He is present everywhere, not directly and immediately by His substance, although there is no space from which the latter is absent, but rather by His operation and the contact of His power; for the Divine substance being absolute needs no relation with beings existing in time, and being simple and without parts, it, in order to be present any and everywhere, does not have to extend itself through space. Yet since operation, operative power, and substance are not really distinct one from another in God, we must affirm that wherever there is an immediate effect due to the Divine causality, there God is really and substantially present.[26] And as there is not a single creature on which God does not exert His activity to preserve and to move it, it follows that God is present everywhere, not only by His action or power, but also by His essence.

When, therefore, Scripture speaks of God as filling heaven and earth: "Do not I fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord?" [27] these words are not to be taken in their literal meaning any more than the other anthropomorphisms found so plentifully in Holy Writ. God's immensity, as we have often insisted, must not be understood in the sense of extension, and we cannot liken it to a boundless ocean containing in its depths all existing things, interpenetrating each portion of the created world and overflowing on all sides. It is to

[26] St. Thomas, *Contra Gentes*, 1, IV., ch. xxi. [27] Jeremiah xxiii. 24.

commentators and to theologians that we must appeal for the true meaning hidden under the expressions the Holy Spirit has employed in order that He might be understood by all. Such was the attitude of St. Thomas toward the above text.[28]

And since being and the other perfections are communicated to creatures in degrees that vary amazingly —from the grain of sand up to that highest of heavenly spirits—the presence of God as efficient cause has also innumerable degrees, according to the measure in which each creature shares in the Divine perfection.[29]

[28] St. Thomas, *Summa Theologica*, I., q. viii., a. 2.
[29] *Ibid.*, *Summa Theologica*, I., q. xliii., a. 3.

PART SECOND

GOD'S SPECIAL PRESENCE OR THE INDWELLING OF THE HOLY GHOST IN THE SOULS OF THE JUST

CHAPTER I

The Fact of God's Special Presence in the Just. The Sending and the Bestowal of God the Holy Ghost; His Indwelling in the Soul

"Over and above the ordinary and common manner in which God is present in all things (namely, by His essence, His power, and His presence, as the cause is present in the effects which are a participation in His goodness), there is another and a special presence which is appropriate to rational nature, a presence by which God is said to be present as that which is known is present to the being who knows, and as that which is loved is present to the being who loves. And because a rational and a loving creature by its operation in knowing and loving is placed in contact with God Himself, for that reason it is said that God by this special manner of presence is not only *in* a rational creature, but also that He *dwells* in it as in His temple. No other effect than sanctifying grace can be the reason why of this new manner of presence of the Divine Person. It is therefore solely by sanctifying grace that the Divine Person is thus sent forth and proceeds temporarily.

. . . And always, together with grace, one receives also the Holy Spirit Himself, Who is thus given and sent." [1]

Despite their brevity, these words of St. Thomas contain a wonderful summary of the question we are studying. Here we find clear mention of, first, the *fact* of this special presence of God in the soul which is in the state of grace; second, the *nature* of this presence; it is a *substantial,* that is to say, a most real presence; God is present not merely by His favors, but in Person; third, the *mode* of this presence: He is there no longer in the capacity of an active or efficient cause, but as a Guest and a Friend, as an *object of knowledge and love;* fourth, the *subjects* who alone can benefit by such a gift, must be rational beings; fifth, the *condition* for this presence is the state of grace.

To be well understood, these considerations should each be deeply pondered; they shall receive a treatment proportioned to the difficulties each may present, and to the degree of their importance. We shall devote our attention first to the *fact* of this special presence of God in the souls of the just.

I

There is perhaps no truth more frequently alluded to in the Gospel and in the Epistles of St. Paul than that of the *mission,* that is to say, the *giving,* the *indwelling* of the Divine Persons in the souls of the just. When about to leave this earth to return to His heavenly Father, Our Lord promised to send the Paraclete to His Apostles, wishing thereby to comfort them, and to lessen somewhat the sorrow caused by His departure: "I tell you the truth; it is expedient to you that I go; for if I go not the Paraclete will not

[1] St. Thomas, *Summa Theologica,* I., q. xliii., a. 3.

come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you." [2] "When the Paraclete cometh, Whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth Who proceeds from the Father, He will give testimony of Me, and you also will give testimony of Me, because you have been with Me from the beginning." [3]

Again He said to them: "If you love Me, keep My Commandments. And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Paraclete, that He may abide with you forever; the Spirit of Truth, Whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, nor knoweth Him; but you shall know Him, because He shall abide with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you orphans, I will come to you." [4] This new Comforter Whom Jesus promises to His Apostles, is no other than the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Truth, as He calls Him, *i. e.*, the Spirit of the Son, Who Himself is the substantial and essential Truth: "I am the truth." [5] As long as He dwelt among them, Jesus Himself comforted His disciples; now that His departure will unavoidably expose them to tribulations of all kinds, He promises them another comforter, the Holy Ghost, Whom He will send from the Father.

This *mission* of the Holy Ghost, this *giving* of the Paraclete, Whom Jesus promised to His chosen ones, was not, however, to be the exclusive privilege of the Apostles; it was intended also as the privilege of all those who, through grace, are made the children of God. This is why St. Paul, writing to the Galatians, says to them: "Because you are sons, God hath sent the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying Abba (Father)." [6] "You have not received the spirit of bondage again in fear, but you have received the spirit of adoption of sons, whereby we cry, Abba (Father)." [7]

[2] John xvi. 7. [3] John xv. 26, 27. [4] John xiv. 15-18.
[5] John xiv. 6. [6] Galatians iv. 6. [7] Romans viii. 15.

"Because the charity of God is poured forth in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost, Who is given to us." [8]

Yet it is not only the Holy Ghost we receive through grace and with grace, but all Three Persons of the Holy Trinity. Our Lord says explicitly in the Gospel of St. John: "If anyone love Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to Him, and will make Our abode with Him." [9] This is why the Apostle, in his exhortations to the early Christians, on the necessity of shunning all sin, of preserving pure and without spot the sanctuary of their soul, could find no more powerful appeal, no more urgent reason, no more persuasive argument, than the fact that they were the temple of God: "Know you not that you are the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? But if any man violate the temple of God, him shall God destroy. For the temple of God is holy, which you are." [10]

We must pause here, lest we multiply excessively the Scripture texts that prove the fact of a mission, a giving of the Divine Persons, an indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the just soul. Our present task will be to gather together the teachings contained in these passages and set them forth in concise language.

What first strikes the reader in all these texts, taken in their natural and obvious meaning, and that shines forth with the clearest evidence, is the *fact of a special presence of God* in souls in the state of grace. In truth, if the Holy Ghost is *sent* to these souls, is it not in order that He be present to them otherwise than He is present elsewhere, for if He be present to them in the common ordinary way, what does this second mission mean, and what new thing does it give to the soul?

On the other hand, if the Holy Ghost is *given* to souls with and through grace, the obvious reason seems to

[8] Romans v. 5. [9] John xiv. 23. [10] 1 Corinthians iii. 16, 17.

be that these souls may possess Him and enjoy His presence freely. Now rational beings alone are capable of possessing God by knowledge and love; they alone can enjoy His presence; for them, therefore, is reserved a special presence of the Divinity which is beyond the reach of beings of a lower order. Further on we shall see that not every rational being can possess God in this way, nor participate in the fruition—begun or consummated—of the Sovereign Good. Certain preliminary dispositions are requisite for such a possession or fruition, viz., either sanctifying grace or the *lumen gloriæ*, the light of glory in heaven. However, let us not anticipate. For the moment we may confine ourselves to a theological analysis of the concepts of *mission*, *giving*, and *indwelling*, and examine whether these terms necessarily imply a special mode of presence of the *Divine* persons in those souls to whom they are *sent* or *given*, and in whom they come to *dwell*.

II

In the ordinary sense of the term, "the word mission suggests the idea of a commission, intrusted to a person with the obligation of departing from the sender and proceeding to the terminus of his mission. It is in this way, for instance, that the head of a State sends this or that representative of his on an ordinary or extraordinary mission to some foreign power, either to represent him there as an ambassador or to negotiate for him some particular important business. However, a mission is not always instituted through a command, as is the case where a superior delegates an inferior. Frequently enough it is given through advice, as, for instance, when a prime minister sends the king or the emperor to war." There may even be a mission by virtue of a mere going forth from a source or origin, as, for instance, when the sun sends us its rays. Yet, what-

ever be the way in which it is accomplished, a mission always involves a twofold relationship: a relationship which the person holds to the one who sends him, and then his relation to the place or person he is sent to: a person is sent by another person to a third determined person or to some definite place.[11]

In the Divine mission of the Holy Spirit, there is no sending by command; for in God the Three Persons have the same nature and the same degree of power, and therefore no one of them has authority over the other, no one of them issues commands to the other. On the other hand, as they are also perfectly equal in wisdom and knowledge, they neither advise nor guide one another. "The mission of the Divine Persons, therefore, is given neither through command or advice; in the above texts the word *sent* conveys merely the idea of origin or of procession, which is wholly according to the equality of the Divine Persons." [12]

The second relationship in a mission is that which exists between the person sent and the place to which he is sent. It means that the messenger must proceed to the place whither he is sent—if he be not there already—so as to be properly placed to fulfill the charge intrusted to him.

In missions between created beings, the ambassador, after having taken leave of his master, starts on his journey and proceeds to the court of the ruler or nation to which he is accredited; here then we have a change of place. It is not impossible, however, that one who is already resident in a foreign country shall receive from his own proper master a special mission to the ruler in whose lands he resides. In the latter case, the ambassador has not to proceed to the terminus of his mission, since he is already there, yet, on account of

[11] St. Thomas, *Summa Theologica*, I., q. xliii., a. 1.
[12] *Ibid.*, I., q. xliii., a. 1, ad. 1.

the command issued to him, he becomes present in the country of his sojourning in a new capacity, namely, no longer as a simple individual, but as the official representative of his master. But in the Divine mission, there is neither change of place nor separation. God, being everywhere, can find no place where He is not already present; nor can the person sent be separated from the sender, for the Three Persons of the adorable Trinity, having one and the same nature, are necessarily inseparable. By virtue of this relationship, where one of the Three Persons is present, there also are the other two.[13]

However, to have a mission in the true sense of the term, it is necessary for a Divine Person to begin to be present in a *new manner* in the place to which He is sent. When, for instance, the Son of God was sent into the world on the business of our redemption, He did not leave the bosom of His Father to come amongst men. He was already in the world, as the primal cause of the world, preserving what He had created: "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him." [14] Yet He entered into the world anew, inasmuch as He appeared there clothed with our humanity.

Now what we have said touching the visible mission of the Word applies also to the invisible mission of the Holy Ghost. When the Third Person of the Trinity is sent by the Father and the Son for the sanctification of mankind, this involves neither change nor separation for Him. All the change takes place in the creature, who, through grace, enters into a new relationship with the Divinity by becoming both the friend and the sanctuary of God.

Only two things, therefore, are implied in a Divine mission: a procession of origin, and a new mode of presence. In other words, the Person sent proceeds

[13] *Summa Theologica*, I., q. xliii., a. 1, ad. 2. [14] John i. 10.

from the Person who sends him, and He becomes present in a new way at the terminus of His mission. And as the Son proceeds from the Father alone, He can be sent only by the Father; whereas the Holy Ghost, proceeding, as He does from both the Father and the Son, can be sent by both Father and Son. As to the Father, He proceeds from no one—by reason of His innascibility. He, therefore, can never be sent. Nevertheless, of His own accord, He accompanies the two other Persons into the soul of the just.

III

Is there any difference between the *mission* of the Holy Ghost, and His being *given?* Yes, there is this difference: the word *mission* expresses a relationship of origin of the Holy Ghost with the Father and the Son, as well as a special mode of His presence in the creature He sanctifies; but so far we have not touched upon the nature of this presence; whereas the word *giving* already indicates, though vaguely, something of the special character of the union which rational beings contract through grace with the Divine Person that is given to them. To describe a giving of the Holy Ghost it is not sufficient only to say that a new relation is established between the Holy Ghost and the soul. This soul must *possess* Him Whom the Church so rightly calls the *gift of God;* for what is given to a person becomes his property, his possession, and to possess something means to have the faculty of freely enjoying it and disposing of it.[15] "Now rational beings alone are capable of possessing and enjoying God, either in a perfect manner like the elect in heaven, or in an initial and imperfect way, like the just and the saints here below." [16]

[15] St. Thomas, *Summa Theologica*, I., q. xxxviii., a. 1.
[16] *Ibid.*, *Sententiæ*, 1, I., dist. xiv., q. ii., a. 2, ad. 2.

Irrational beings may receive the motion, the impulse, the action of God; they cannot *enjoy* His presence nor *dispose freely* of His favors. Again, they may participate after a fashion, that is, remotely and analogically, in the Divine perfection; but they are utterly incapable of possessing the Divine substance and of enjoying the Sovereign Good. The reason is simple; for one can possess God and enjoy His presence only through knowledge and love, and intelligent beings alone are capable of eliciting such acts. Even intelligent beings, however, must be raised above their natural condition to possess and enjoy God in this way: they must receive a grace from on high which will transform them and make them share in the Divinity of the Word and in the Love which springs as from one fountain, from the Father and the Son.[17] The giving of a Divine Person therefore involves a special presence of the Divinity in the soul, a presence absolutely distinct from that by which God is present in all things as their efficient cause.

The differentiations of these two modes of presence are very numerous. For instance, the presence of God, as *efficient cause*,[18] is common to all beings without exception. His presence as an *object of knowledge and love*, on the contrary, must necessarily be restricted to rational beings. Again, the first presence is universal; it is found realized wherever there is any effect of the Divine power; neither can it cease so long as the created being remains in existence, for God must be there to preserve it in existence. The second presence, that of knowledge and of love—a presence not merely substantial and objective—is the exclusive privilege of the just soul. As, too, it is the result of the free will of God, it comes with grace and is lost with grace. The

[17] St. Thomas, *Summa Theologica*, I., q. xxxviii., a. 1.
[18] *Ibid.*, *Summa Theologica*, I., q. viii., a. 3.

first of these presences, that of efficient cause (even in a rational being), brings to its object neither joy nor consolation: frequently he is unaware of it, or he ignores it. How many rational beings, capable of knowing God's presence, and who often do know of it, desire in their malice to rid themselves of it by banishing from their heart Him Whom they rightly know as the reproachful witness of their evil conduct and the avenger of their crimes? The second of these presences, that of both knowledge and love, on the other hand, overflow the rational being with sweetness and fragrance; it is a union of fruition beginning or consummated. Who, then, could confound these two presences, so different one from the other? By the one, God is present in us merely as an active force; by the other, as a Divine Protector and Friend.

IV

God, then, is present in the souls of the just in a very special manner. According to the Scriptural expression, He *dwells* in them. For however strange it may seem, it is allowable to say that God does not dwell wherever He is. He is really and substantially present to innumerable creatures only as their efficient cause, He exerts His activity in them and produces in them this or that effect; but He does not *dwell* in them all in the sense Scripture gives to this word. This is easy to understand, for in every language the house of God has a special name, God's temple. Now we do not give the name temple to any ordinary abode or one erected for profane uses. The temple is a place dedicated and consecrated to the worship of God, Who is pleased to dwell therein and receive the homages of those who come to adore Him, "having a sort of sacramental holiness. . ." "But in the souls of the faithful of Christ

there is the holiness of grace which they have received by baptism, to whom the Apostle speaks: 'You are washed, you are sanctified.' " [19]

For temples built of earthly materials this consecration is performed by the bishop. There is a rite made up of many prayers, anointings and ceremonies, the purpose of which is to teach Christians that henceforth this spot and this building is holy, and that their bearing when present in it must be one of most profound reverence for the Sovereign Majesty of God Who dwells there. But for the spiritual temples of our souls this consecration has been, as already said, given by the grace we receive in holy baptism; and if we have the misfortune to profane this inner sanctuary by sin, the Divine mercy holds out to us in the Sacrament of Penance, a means whereby our soul may be consecrated anew.

The desecration of anything consecrated to God is a sacrilege; and it may draw down God's wrath upon him who commits it. This is why the Apostle St. Paul, in order to explain to the Corinthians the gravity of such a profanation and the terrible consequences that may result, wrote to them: √"If anyone violate the temple of God, him shall God destroy." [20] The reason he gave was that "the temple of God is holy."

Some might be tempted to believe that God dwells also in the souls of sinners although this is painful and repugnant to Him; but Scripture is explicit in denying it. We read, indeed, that wisdom (we may understand by this word Uncreated Wisdom, namely, the Word), "will not enter into a malicious soul nor dwell in a body subject to sins." [21] The sacred text adds that the Holy Ghost also, Who is a Spirit of Discipline, "will flee from the deceitful," and that "He will withdraw Himself from

[19] St. Thomas, *Comment.* in 1 Corinthians vi. 11.
[20] 1 Corinthians iii. 17. [21] Wisdom i. 4.

thoughts deceitful, nor abide where iniquity cometh in." [22] Then, to ward off all error and forestall all illusion, it further affirms that not only does God not dwell in the souls of sinners, but that "the Lord is far from the wicked." [23]

It is interesting to listen to what St. Augustine has to say on this point. In his book, *On the Presence of God,* addressed to Dardanus and containing an *ex professo* treatment of the question of the Divine indwelling, the saint first explains how God is present everywhere, wholly in each being and in each part of that being. He then adds: "God, Who is everywhere, yet dwells not in all men. . . And even though He dwells in all sanctified souls, yet not equally so in all but more fully in some than in others." After adverting to the fact that He does not dwell at all by His loving presence (which is the presence of sanctifying grace) in evil souls, but only in those whom He has drawn to Him and who have become like Him by a pious and holy life, the saint adds, that even those who are not perfectly good are not deprived of His indwelling full and entire, though they do not enjoy His indwelling in that higher degree of love enjoyed by more saintly ones: "In all souls who are in His friendship God dwells by His goodness and His grace as in a temple most dear to Him, possessing Him, some in a greater and others in a less degree of love, according to their different capacity." [24]

Thus, according to St. Augustine, God dwells in a soul only on condition He is embraced and possessed by that soul. This is effected through knowledge and love, for to possess God is to know Him, as the saint explains further on: "The knowledge requisite in a soul to be fitted for God's dwelling place, is not that of a proud philosopher who knows God, but not with knowledge

[22] Wisdom i. 5. [23] Proverbs xv. 29.
[24] *De Præsentia Dei,* ch. v. and vi., n. 16-19.

accompanied by love, glorifying Him and giving Him thanks." Strange as it may seem, it is furthermore certain, that God dwells in the souls of some who have not as yet attained to knowledge of Him, but have received His grace and love in baptism; such are baptized infants. Whereas He does not dwell in others who have knowledge of Him without love.

To become the temple and the dwelling of the Divinity, it is necessary to have both grace and charity. This is a condition *sine qua non*. Therefore not only are they who know God without loving Him deprived of the presence of this Divine Guest, but those also who—as sometimes has been the case—are given power even to perform miracles without being in the state of grace; for these things are wrought by God either in virtue of His ordinary presence or through the ministry of the holy angels. So far St. Augustine, who has won in the schools the title of Doctor of Grace.

V

The Doctor of Grace is thus very explicit, as we have just seen, in affirming the *fact* of a special presence or indwelling of the Divinity in the souls of the just, although he is not so clear in his explanation as to just how this presence is to be understood. His faithful disciple and interpreter, the Angelic Doctor, has filled this want, by bringing out the doctrine into full light. This is how St. Thomas expresses himself in his commentary on the words of the Apostle: *"You are the temple of the living God:"* [✓] "Although God be in all things by His presence, His power, and His essence, nevertheless He is not said to *dwell* in them, but only in those who are sanctified by grace. For God is indeed in all things by His action inasmuch as He joins Himself to them by giving them existence and preserving

them in it; but as to those who are sanctified, it is *by their own action* that they are joined to Him, and in a certain manner hold and contain Him, which is to love and to know Him. For whosoever loves and knows is to be said to have in himself that which he knows and loves." [25]

Commenting on that other text of the same Apostle: "Know you not that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth within you," St. Thomas had already made the following remarks: "God dwells in men by faith, which works by love, according to the words of the Apostle to the Ephesians: 'That Christ may dwell by faith in your hearts, you being rooted and founded in charity' (iii. 17). And to prove that the faithful are the temple of God, St. Paul again insists that 'the Spirit of God dwelleth in you' (1 Cor. iii. 16). . . . As God fills the heavens and the earth by His ordinary presence (Jer. xxiii. 24), so does He spiritually dwell in the faithful soul as a father dwells in his very home and amid his family, and this in proportion to the soul's knowledge and love of Him. . . For knowledge must not lack love as its accompaniment, as St. John teaches: 'God is charity; and he that abideth in charity abideth in God, and God in him' (1 John iv. 16)." [26]

It is therefore an incontestable truth that God dwells in a *special way* in the souls of the just. Scripture, tradition, and the teaching of theologians affirm the fact of a special presence of the Divinity in those souls to whom the Holy Ghost is sent or given, and who, through grace, have become the temple and the abode of the adorable Trinity. God is no longer present merely by His operation, that is to say, as merely efficient Cause; He is there as a *Guest*, as a *Friend*, as the

[25] St. Thomas, in 2 Corinthians, c. vi. 16; lect. 3.
[26] *Ibid.*, in 1 Corinthians iii. 16, lect. 3.

Sovereign Good, and souls can begin even here below to enjoy Him as such, though the completion of that joy is reserved for eternity.

This new mode of presence, which does not exclude the others, but is superadded to them, involves no change in God, since He is immutable. It does however suppose a modification in the creature, and the production of a new effect that will become the principle of a new relationship between God and the soul.[27] Henceforward the soul will be related to God no longer merely as the effect is to its cause, but as the owner to the object of which he has assumed possession and that is to be henceforth for him a source of enjoyment. God, on His side, enters into the relation of both the possessor and the thing possessed, a relation between Himself and the soul that far exceeds the preëxisting one of mere causality. He becomes the soul's Good, its Friend, and its Spouse—the Divine object of its knowledge and love.

This new effect, which establishes between God and the just soul relations so different from those otherwise existing between any creature and its Creator, is no other than that which is known as sanctifying grace. Neither natural endowments, however noble and magnificent we might suppose them to be, nor graces of a miraculous kind, called *gratis datæ,* such as the power of miracles or of prophecy, nor faith itself, nor hope, apart from charity, suffice to effectuate such relations between the soul and God, nor to establish so sweet and yet so close a union as this "of sanctifying grace, this new mode of union between the Divine Person and the rational creature." [28]

[27] St. Thomas, *Summa Theologica,* I., q. xliii., a. 2.
[28] *Ibid.,* I., q. xliii., a. 3.

CHAPTER II

The Nature of This Sanctifying Presence

I

How are we to understand the words of Scripture, when they speak of the Holy Ghost as being *sent* to us; *given* to us for the sanctification of our souls; and of the three Divine Persons as dwelling in our souls through grace? Are these words to be taken in their natural and obvious meaning, and must we therefore understand that there is a real coming of the Holy Spirit, a true, and as it were, physical and substantial presence of the adorable Trinity in the just soul? Or must we take these expressions in a metaphorical sense, viewing them as so many figures of speech—such as are frequent in human language—which attribute to the effect the name of its cause? In other words, is it *really* the Holy Ghost in Person Who is given to us through and with grace, and Who enters with His endowments into our hearts; or do we receive in reality only the created favors of grace and the infused virtues which are their inseparable accompaniment?

It might seem at first sight that by the mission or the giving of a Divine Person we should understand the presence of this Person in the soul only by His effects and His favors, by the communication of some perfection that is appropriated by this Person and that manifests Him, and that it is not the real coming of the Person Himself. God, some might argue, is every-

where; therefore, how is it possible for Him to be present anywhere otherwise than by His effects?

This was one of the tenets of the Arians and the Macedonians, heretics who were so persistent in their denial of the Divinity of the Word and of the Holy Ghost in the fourth century. The followers of these sects refused absolutely to see in the texts of Holy Scripture referring to the invisible missions of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, anything but the outpouring of created graces. From their point of view they were logical in maintaining such a belief, for it was hardly possible for them to admit that it was really the Holy Ghost in Person Whom Our Lord promised to send, and Whom He did send to His Apostles, without professing belief, at the same time, in the Divinity of the Saviour. Only God can send forth a Divine Person; and if the Spirit of Truth promised by Jesus Christ, the Spirit Who, in pouring forth into our hearts grace and charity, makes us the adopted sons of God, is truly a person, He can only be a Divine Person, for God alone can deify a soul by communicating to it His nature.

At the Council of Florence, in the fifteenth century, the Greek schismatics maintained also that the promises made by Our Lord Jesus Christ to His Apostles relative to the sending of the Holy Ghost, were to be understood of the sevenfold Gifts, and other favors, and not of the very Person of the Holy Ghost. Their purpose in doing this was to escape the necessity of professing with the Catholics the procession of the Holy Ghost from both the Father and the Son. To support their pretention, they endeavored to found it upon texts drawn from Holy Writ, appealing to certain passages of the Scriptures in which the benefits conferred by the Holy Ghost are designated under His name. For example, they quoted the text of Isaias, in which the Prophet, speaking of the Messias Who was to come,

says: "The Spirit of the Lord will rest upon Him: the spirit of wisdom, and of understanding, the spirit of counsel, and of fortitude, the spirit of knowledge, and of godliness, and He shall be filled with the spirit of the fear of the Lord." [1]

Some Catholic theologians—but only a few—have inclined to an opinion liable to be interpreted as favoring that of these ancient schismatics. But St. Thomas, who is always so temperate in his criticisms, does not fear to qualify as erroneous the opinion that "teaches that the Holy Spirit is not given, but His graces only." [2] He goes farther, and he teaches as a positive theological truth, that "with and through grace we receive also the Holy Ghost Who thus becomes the Guest of our soul." [3]

As a matter of fact, innumerable passages of Scripture are so explicit on this point that it seems impossible, without distorting the text of Holy Writ, not to admit the full reality of this indwelling presence. St. Paul, writing to the faithful of Corinth and of Rome, exclaims: "Know you not that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth within you?" [4] "Know you not that your members are the temple of the Holy Ghost, Who is in you, Whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?" [5] "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. . . . And if the Spirit of Him Who raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in you: He that raised up Jesus Christ from the dead, shall quicken also your mortal bodies, because of His Spirit that dwelleth in you." [6] Is it possible, we ask, for an unprejudiced mind not to recognize in the living members of Jesus Christ the real, effective and personal presence of the Holy Ghost—who can fail to

[1] Isaias xi. 2, 3. [2] *Summa Theologica*, I., q. xliii., a. 3, Obj. 1a.
[3] *Ibid., in corp. art.* [4] 1 Corinthians iii. 16.
[5] 1 Corinthians vi. 19. [6] Romans viii. 9-11.

see in this Spirit, Who is in us, Who is sent by God, and Who *dwells* in our souls as in His temple, something more divine than created gifts of that Spirit?

And if the Apostle had really purposed to affirm that the Holy Ghost is in His very Divine substance present in the souls of the just, could he have expressed himself in more explicit terms? Then, on the other hand, how strange his words would seem if, when declaring that we are "the temple of the Holy Ghost," *"Who is in us," "Who dwells in us," "Whom we have from God,"* he intended his readers to understand only that God has placed in the soul no more than the created gift of grace! We raise a temple to God Himself and not to His gifts. Does a creature become the house of God because it is adorned with Divine gifts, or even because God acts in it, and not rather because it has been consecrated truly to be the abode of the Divinity?

Since, then, nothing can oblige us to distort the words of Scripture and to give them a figurative meaning (which indeed everything precludes), it would be disregarding the most elementary rules of sacred exegesis not to maintain the natural and obvious meaning of these various expressions, which point to the real presence of the Holy Ghost in the souls of the just.

We may parallel here the words of Our Lord promising to His Apostles "another Paraclete," [7] "the Spirit of Truth, Who proceedeth from the Father," [8] and Who shall give testimony of Christ.[9] Can we take these words, too, in a metaphorical sense, and see in them only the promise of Divine grace. Grace is not a Paraclete; it cannot give its own living testimony of anyone; it does not proceed from the Father, but is a boon from all the Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity.

Finally, when, after His resurrection, Jesus appeared to His Apostles and breathed on them, saying: "Re-

[7] John xiv. 16. [8] John xv. 26. [9] *Ibid.*

ceive ye the Holy Ghost, whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them, and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained," [10] are we again to see in this only figurative language?

In order to forestall such a minimizing interpretation of the Scriptures, and to give us a more exact notion of His invisible mission, the Holy Ghost took the precaution to say, through the mouth of the Apostle, that in the work of our justification, He not only pours forth grace and a created charity into our hearts, but He comes there Himself in Person: "The charity of God is spread abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, Who is given to us." [11]

We can make no mistake here; the created gift is clearly distinguished from the Giver; charity is poured forth into our hearts, *and* the Holy Ghost is given to us; *both* are communicated to us. St. Paul speaks on several occasions of the Holy Ghost as a seal stamped upon our souls, the pledge of eternal glory, and, as it were, its first installment.[12]

Therefore does St. Augustine make this remark: "What kind of thing is this pledge? Really, instead of a pledge, it is rather part payment of eternal life. For a pledge or token is taken up when the thing it stands for is given." The very thing itself, eternal life, is therefore bestowed in its first installment by the entrance of the Holy Ghost into our souls with grace.[13]

Again St. Augustine in thus commenting on Scripture is not less positive nor less explicit in teaching that the mission or sending, properly so-called, of a Divine Person—we speak of the invisible mission—requires, besides the bestowal of a created gift, the effective and substantial presence of that Person. Speaking of the

[10] John xx. 22, 23. [11] Romans v. 5.
[12] Ephesians i. 13, 14; 2 Corinthians i. 21, 22.
[13] *De Verbis Apostoli*, Sermo xiii.

outpouring of the Holy Ghost on Pentecost day, he says: "The Holy Ghost therefore came that day to the souls of His faithful, no longer by simple activity or a grace of visitation, but even by the presence of His veritable Divine majesty; and it was not only His sacred fragrance—the sacred ointment of His grace—but His very substance which was poured into their hearts." [14] Could one wish for more formal and, at the same time, more graceful affirmation of the indwelling of God in our souls?

In their controversies with the Arians and the Macedonians, the Fathers of the Church frequently advanced this indwelling of the Son and the Holy Ghost in souls as a manifest proof of Their Divinity; and very rightly so, for to abide in a soul, to produce and preserve in that soul sanctifying grace, one must penetrate into its very essence, and this the Divinity alone can do: "God alone works the interior effect of a sacrament, as well because God alone comes down upon the soul in which the effect of the sacrament exists (for nothing can immediately work in a place where it does not exist); and also because grace, which is the interior effect of the sacrament, is from God alone." [15]

This is the way Didymus the Blind, the Alexandrine doctor, whose vision in the things of God was so keen, expounds this argument in his treatise, once so famous, *On the Holy Ghost*, whence, according to St. Jerome, the Latins have borrowed everything they have said on this subject: "It would be impious to rank the Holy Spirit among created things. One creature cannot dwell in another. Arts and sciences, virtues and vices, in some manner dwell in us, but it is as accidental qualities, and not as substances. . . . Now it is the proper substance of the Holy Ghost which dwells in the just and which

[14] St. Augustine, Sermo clxxxv., *de Temp.*
[15] St. Thomas, *Summa Theologica*, III., q. lxiv., a. 1.

sanctifies them, and it belongs only to the Three Persons of the Holy Trinity, to be able, by their substance, to penetrate into souls." [16]

Then, foreseeing the objection some might raise against this doctrine by citing the passage of the Gospel where it is said that Satan entered into the heart of Judas,[17] he answers, that Satan entered not in substance —this being the privilege of God alone—but by his operation, *i. e.*, by his treacherous suggestions and his malicious, wicked deceptions.[18] And the Angelic Doctor, as we have seen, holds the same doctrine.[19] It is true that the devil can enter into our bodies, move our members against our will, and act upon our senses; and also upon our imagination, and even indirectly upon our will, as is seen in the case of demoniacs; but he cannot invade the very depths of our being, nor penetrate, at least, directly into the sanctuary of our understanding and will. If, then, he enters into the heart of any man, it is not in his own substance that he enters, nor does he enter into ours; but only by the effects of his malice—by the bad thoughts he addresses to us and the criminal acts he suggests, and only too often succeeds in making us commit.[20]

It is an exclusive and inalienable privilege of God, the natural consequence of His act of creation and of conservation, as also of His absolute sovereignty over created spirits, to be able to penetrate in His very substance into the very depths of their being in order to maintain them in existence, and into the innermost sanctuary of their will to make this faculty act according to His good pleasure, and to influence it directly and immediately to perform this or that act, although, ac-

[16] Didymus, *De Spiritu Sancto*, n. 25. [17] John xiii. 27.
[18] Didymus, *De Spiritu Sancto*, n. 61.
[19] St. Thomas, *Contra Gent.*, lib. iv., c. xvii.
[20] *Ibid.*, *Contra Gent.*, lib. iv., c. xviii.

cording to the words of Sacred Scripture, God never actually forces this faculty.

St. Cyril of Alexandria devotes a whole Dialogue to prove that the Holy Ghost actually dwells in us and makes us, by His union with our soul, partakers of the nature of God. Questioning Hermias, his interlocutor, he asks: "Do we not say that man is made in the image of God?" "Without doubt," answers Hermias. Cyril: "Now who impresses that image on us, if not the Holy Ghost?" Hermias: "Yes; but not purely as God, but simply as the dispenser of grace." Cyril: "Then it is not He Who imprints Himself as a seal upon our soul, and He deems it sufficient only to engrave His grace there?" Hermias: "It seems so to me." Cyril: "Well, then, if such be the case, we must call man the image of grace, and not the image of God." [21]

We should never finish were we to give a summary of the innumerable passages, in which the Fathers prove the fact of the indwelling of the Holy Ghost in our souls: the comparisons they use to illustrate this point are as beautiful as they are varied. According to them, the Holy Ghost is a perfume (the Church says, in one of her hymns, a spiritual unction, *spiritalis unctio*), whence sweet and penetrating fragrance steals into our souls to impregnate, transform and deify them, and to render them capable of diffusing around them the good odor of Christ.[22]

He is also called a seal which marks us with the image of God, restoring this image in the soul when it has been effaced by sin, as a stamp leaves its imprint on the soft wax.[23] Or, again, as a man leaves his character and his ideas in everything he puts his hand to, so the Holy Ghost, the seal of God, stamps Himself upon

[21] St. Cyril of Alexandria, *Dial.* 7, *de Trinit.*
[22] 2 Corinthians ii. 15.
[23] St. Cyril, *Thesaurus*, assertio xxxiv.

our souls; with this difference, however, that the Divine character communicated to us is living and makes us living images of the Divine substance.[24] He is a fire which penetrates us through and through, as natural fire heats metal to its very depths and imparts to it its own properties—brilliancy, heat, radiancy—without changng its nature.[25]

He is the purest gold, says St. Cyril of Alexandria, in the Dialogue already quoted, which, so to speak, gilds our souls and makes them glow with beauty in the sight of God and His angels.

He is a light whose rays are cast upon chaste souls as sunbeams upon a clear crystal, making them brilliant centres from which spread out grace and charity.[26]

He is the sweet Guest of our soul, *dulcis hospes animæ*, as the Church sings, Who enters our soul to rejoice it by His presence, Who speaks familiarly with us, rouses us to good deeds, comforts us in our afflictions, and enriches us with His treasures. Being God, however, He must have a proper abode; so He consecrates our soul by His grace that it may become for Him a fit abode.[27] See also St. Epiphanius.[28] Finally, He is God, clothing our soul with a Divine form, becoming the life of our soul as the soul is the life of our body; not that the Holy Ghost is the formal principle of our supernatural life, but He is its efficient and interior cause.[29] And also St. Augustine.[30]

II

When face to face with so "great a cloud of witnesses," [31] all of them so weighty in authority and so explicit, could anyone still contest the fact of a true, real and substantial presence of the Holy Spirit in souls in

[24] St. Basil, lib. V., *Contra Eunom.* [25] *Ibid.*, lib. III.
[26] St. Basil, *De Spr. Sanc.*, c. ix., n. 23.
[27] St. Cyril of Alexandria, in *Evang. John*, 1. 9.
[28] *Hæreses*, 74, n. 13.
[29] St. Basil, *De Spiritu Sancto*, c. xxvi., n. 61.
[30] Sermo 156, c. vi., n. 6. [31] Hebrews xii. 1.

the state of sanctifying grace? To form an idea of the love with which the early Christians clung to this consoling and precious truth, and of the confidence and fearlessness with which they confessed it when questioned before the pagan tribunals, we have only to read the touching account of St. Lucy's martyrdom.

This noble virgin of Syracuse, had just distributed among the poor the magnificent dowry her mother had laid by for her future marriage; but meantime she had vowed to Christ to remain a virgin. Informed of this and fired with anger, the young nobleman who had asked her hand and to whom Lucy had been betrothed against her will, denounced her to Paschasius, the Roman prætor. Lucy was at once arrested and summoned before Paschasius, who used all means to induce her to give up the Christian religion—which he termed a vain superstition—and to offer sacrifice to the gods. Lucy answered:

"The only sacrifice we are called upon to offer is to visit the widows and orphans and to assist the poor in their needs. For three years I have been offering this sacrifice to the living God, and it remains for me only to sacrifice myself as a victim due to His Divine Majesty."

"Tell that to the Christians," replied Paschasius, "and not to me, who am obliged to carry out the edicts of the Emperors, my masters."

Then Lucy spoke these words with marvelous constancy:

"Thou observest the laws of these princes, I, the laws of God; thou fearest the Emperors of the earth, I, the King of heaven; thou tremblest lest thou shouldst offend a man, I fear the immortal King; thou seekest to please thy masters, I, my Creator. Do not think that thou shalt be able to separate me from the love of Jesus Christ."

"These discourses will finally cease," replied the

Prætor, growing impatient, "when we begin to apply the tortures."

"Words," retorted the intrepid virgin, "cannot fail those to whom Jesus Christ has said: 'And when you shall be brought before governors, and before kings, take no thought how or what to speak, for it shall be given you in that hour what to speak. For it is not you that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you.' " [82]

"Thou believest, then, that thy God is in thee?"

"Those who live pious and chaste lives are the temples of God the Holy Ghost."

"Well," replied Paschasius, "I shall have thee conducted to an infamous place, there the Holy Ghost will abandon thee."

"External violence upon the body cannot touch the purity of the soul; and, if thou causest me to be outraged, I shall have two crowns in heaven instead of one."

All are acquainted with the rest of the holy narrative, and how God in the place of shame, performed a miracle to preserve the honor of His virgin spouse.

Another fact, not less touching, is related by the historian, Eusebius. In the second century Leonidas, the father of Origen, and who later suffered death for the Faith, used to kneel by the bedside of his sleeping son and reverently uncovering the child's breast, kiss it devoutly as the sanctuary wherein dwelt the Holy Ghost.

May we not conclude, then, by saying with theologians and saints, that a soul in the state of grace is not only enriched with the created and sovereignly precious gift of grace, which makes it a partaker of the Divine nature, but that it possesses also within it the presence of the Holy Ghost Himself? The soul enters into the possession of this twofold treasure at one and

[82] Matthew x. 20.

the same moment; however we may distinguish, as does St. Thomas, a twofold logical priority between the bestowal of the created gift and that of the Uncreated One, distinguishing between them according to the way in which we view the question of their causality. If we consider grace as a preliminary disposition, as a necessary preparation for the Divine Guest, then it is grace which is communicated to us first, for the disposition naturally precedes the *forma* or the perfection for which it is to prepare. On the other hand, if we consider the Holy Ghost as the Author of grace and the end for which grace is given, then He it is Who enters the soul first. And this, remarks St. Thomas, is what is strictly speaking precedence: *"Et hoc est simpliciter esse prius."* [33]

The crowning of all God's liberalities, however, consists in this: it is not only once in our life, at the solemn hour of our justification, that we thus receive the Holy Ghost, but there is moreover a hidden mission and a repeated giving of this Divine Person at each new and extraordinary advance we make in virtue and a fresh increase of grace and charity in our hearts. For instance, when one receives the sacraments with very special dispositions; or performs under the influence of actual grace some fervent act of charity; when entering, as it were, into a new state of grace; or when one faces martyrdom in defence of his faith; or advances into the power of working miracles, or of prophesying; or renounces for the love of God what he possesses of this world's goods; or undertakes any arduous work for God's sake.[34]

O Holy Spirit, how many times hast Thou not entered my soul; With what incomprehensible love hast Thou not been pleased to fix therein Thine abode! Alas! I have been ignorant of all this; or, at least, I have

[33] St. Thomas, *Sententiæ*, lib. I., dist., 14, q. ii., a. 1.
[34] *Ibid.*, *Summa Theologica*, I., q. xliii., a. 6, ad 2.

grasped that adorable truth but feebly and as in a dream. As a result, how coldly I have received Thee! And yet Thou didst not abandon me. Vouchsafe me, then, the understanding of Thy Divine bounty; give me a pure and filial heart so that my soul may welcome Thee at each of Thy visits, and count it a supernal joy to receive Thee and converse with Thee. May I forget all created goods to think only of Thee, O kindest of visitors, the Friend and Comforter of my soul—awaiting the day when Thou shalt be its eternal happiness in heaven.

There is, indeed, a final mission of the Holy Ghost. This will take place at the moment of our entry into heaven, when, at length, we take possession of our Sovereign Good.[35] The Holy Spirit will then enter our soul not in shadow and in mystery, but in the full light of perfect vision. He will give Himself to our soul in a perfect and consummate way; He will take up His definitive abode therein, to be, with the Father and the Son, its everlasting bliss.

III

How are we more clearly and in detail to understand and explain this special Divine presence, as well as this repeated entrance of the Holy Ghost into the souls of the just? The answer to this question will be the object of a later chapter; for the moment it suffices to have ascertained and outlined the fact of the coming and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

A last question before bringing to a close this present chapter. What name are we to give to the union established by grace between the soul and the Holy Ghost? Is it a *substantial* union, like that between the body and the soul; or merely an *accidental* or incidental union, analogous to that between the horseman and his beast; the vase and the liquid it contains?

[35] St. Thomas, *Summa Theologica*, I., q. xliii., a. 6, ad 3.

A few theologians have not feared to call this union a *substantial* one. Their motive was good, since they desired in this way to sweep aside more thoroughly the error of those who identify the mission of a Divine Person with the bestowal upon the soul of certain created gifts—graces. Such a mode of speech, however, must be absolutely rejected as inexact, and apt to convey false notions. If the choice of exact terms, faithfully reproducing our thought, must in all circumstances be the object of serious attention, it is especially so in questions as difficult and delicate as the present one, where everything has its own importance, and where we must avoid with the greatest care all untrue or equivocal expressions. Now a substantial union is, strictly speaking, one which terminates in a unity of substance, whether we take the word substance to mean a substantial nature or a person, a *suppositum*.[36]

We have an example of this twofold substantial unity in man: the union of the soul with the body results in one nature and one person. And in Jesus Christ there are two natures and one person, because these two natures have only one subsistence or basis, namely, that of the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, the Word. The Word seizes upon the human nature of Christ and unites it to Itself substantially. Nothing like this takes place between our soul and the Holy Ghost. This union suppresses neither duality of natures nor distinction of persons. We must refrain, therefore, from calling it a *substantial union* and use exclusively the terms *substantial, presence, true and real indwelling*, which embody exactly the doctrine of Scripture and the teaching of theology; these expressions express the whole truth without exposing the reader to dangerous misinterpretations.

[36] St. Thomas, *Summa Theologica*, III., q. ii., a. 6, ad 3.

CHAPTER III

The Mode or Manner of This Presence of the Holy Ghost

God Is Present in the Souls of the Just Not Only as Efficient Cause, but Also as Guest, Friend, and as an Object of Knowledge and Love

We have seen that it is an incontestable truth, plainly taught by Holy Scripture, the Fathers and theologians, that when the Holy Ghost pours His grace into our soul, He at the same time comes there in His own Person, and there makes His home. It remains to determine the mode of this special presence in the just, and to show *how* it is that God is in them, not only as an efficient cause, but also in another and entirely distinct capacity.

We now approach the most delicate and abstruse part of the question which we have proposed to treat; and it is here particularly that a reliable and experienced guide is indispensable. Fortunately, we do not have to search far, since we possess such a one in the Angelic Doctor, St. Thomas, in whom are united the most penetrating genius and the highest sanctity, and who is acknowledged to be the spokesman of all that is best and holiest in the Catholic Schools. But we must follow him closely and never leave him if we would not go astray. This we would infallibly do, like so many others, if we either fell short of the truth, giving only a defective and insufficient explanation, or else if we overshot our mark, falling into exaggeration by making the indwelling of

the Holy Ghost a sort of hypostatic union with the soul: two dangers which, in our opinion, some writers have not escaped.

No one will be surprised to meet a certain diversity of opinion among Catholic theologians, on this question of the union of our soul with God, and particularly on the way in which it is to be conceived. The contrary, rather, would be remarkable in such a difficult subject, on which revelation throws only a feeble and indirect light. It is true the majority of theologians have ranged themselves with St. Thomas. But some have done so by interpreting their master's thought inexactly. Others have thought to free themselves from a guidance which seemed to them to be a constraint, while it was really only a condition of security. They have tried, to their detriment, to blaze a new trail of their own.

As we proceed, we shall examine the arguments of both these parties. We have an excellent criterion, an easy and sure norm, taken from the very nature of the subject. To be acceptable, an explanation of the special presence of God in the just must realize what the mission, gift and indwelling of the Holy Ghost promises and contains. And we at once see that it must involve a Divine presence at once *substantial* and *special*. If either of these conditions is lacking—if, for example, a certain theologian understands the indwelling of the Holy Ghost in the soul of the just in such a way as to suppose, indeed, a substantial presence of this Divine Person, but only as an efficient cause—then, by this very fact, the explanation given is proved unsound and is to be rejected without further examination. For we do not find there this *special* presence which the invisible mission of the Holy Ghost presupposes. In like manner, if the proposed explanation involves indeed a special presence of the Divine Guest, but one purely ideal, this also is plainly insufficient. For the indwell-

ing of God in us supposes not an ideal, but an effective and *real* presence of God.

I

Of the more or less imperfect opinions concerning this indwelling of the Holy Ghost in the souls of the just, the well known theory of Petavius deserves attention. He taught that the Divine indwelling by grace is *proper* to the Person of the Holy Ghost, differing in this from the almost universal opinion of theologians who make this presence common to all Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity and ascribe it only by *attribution* or *appropriation* to the Third Person. This, however, shall be treated as a separate question later on.

The theory of Petavius was not welcomed when it first appeared, and it is generally rejected by the theological schools of today. Recently, however, it has found favor with a few scholars in France and Germany, and notably, it has had as its defender and sponsor a French Jesuit, Rev. Father Ramière, prematurely taken from the Order he honored by his talents, and from the Church he was edifying by his zeal. The following is a brief summary, given by Father Ramière himself, of the explanation he offers in his work, *Les espérances de l'Eglise:* "We must necessarily admit, that between the just soul and the Holy Spirit there is a union which does not extend to the other Persons of the Blessed Trinity in the same manner as it does to the Third Person."[1]

Let us affirm with this distinguished author, that it is not without reason that the invisible mission whose purpose is the sanctification of souls and their union with God by charity is attributed in a special manner to the Holy Ghost. The motive for this attribution, as we shall explain in a later chapter, is the striking analogy which exists between the character of goodness and

[1] Appendix, xii., note.

love peculiar to the Third Person, and the Divine indwelling of God by grace, which is nothing more than a wondrous outpouring of love and goodness. This is why this wonderful union of the creature with its Creator is *attributed* in a special manner to the Holy Ghost, although it is most certainly *produced* by the presence of all Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity. And rightly so, remarks Leo XIII., since this marvelous union, whose very name is indwelling, is (although effected most truly by the presence of the deity of the entire Trinity), 'We will come to Him and make our abode with Him' (John xiv. 23), nevertheless, predicated as peculiar to the Holy Spirit."[2]

For, as Leo XIII. adds, "whilst traces of Divine power and wisdom appear even in wicked men, charity, which, as it were, is the special mark of the Holy Ghost, is shared in only by the just. In harmony with this, the same Spirit is called Holy, for He, the first and supreme Love, moves souls and leads them to sanctity, which ultimately consists in the love of God. Wherefore, the Apostle, when calling us the temple of God, does not expressly mention the Father or the Son, but the Holy Ghost: 'Know ye not that your members are the temple of the Holy Ghost, Who is in you, Whom you have from God?' "[3]

When, therefore, we read in Scripture or in the writings of the Fathers, of the Holy Ghost being the Guest of our souls, we are to understand merely a special appropriation of terms, based on the custom prevalent in the Church of attributing to the Holy Spirit all Divine works in which predominates the characteristic of love. But it is an error to maintain that these words signify a union between the Holy Ghost and the soul, *particular and peculiar* to the Third Person of the Trinity, and in

[2] Encyclical on the Holy Spirit, Pentecost, 1897.
[3] 1 Corinthians vi. 19.

which the other Persons do not participate in like manner. And it is worse to attribute *exclusively* to the Holy Ghost any kind of effect produced in creatures; to pretend that "if in the mission there is no special function reserved to the Holy Ghost, and if He does nothing more than what the Father and the Son do, He cannot be said to be really sent"—to say such a thing as this is to give a strange meaning to the words of Scripture and Tradition; it is introducing division into the unity of operation in God, contrary to Catholic dogma; which teaches that all works external to the Trinity—*ab extrinseco*—are common to all Three Divine Persons because of Their unity of nature. Where there is but one nature there can be but one force and one operation.[4]

II

With the exception of Petavius' opinion—which is the most improbable one—all the fruitless attempts to explain the way in which the Holy Ghost is present in the just soul invariably resolve themselves into one or the other of the two following hypotheses: either God is substantially present in the souls of the just, but only as their efficient cause—a presence common to all creatures and differing only accidentally in saints, in sinners, and even in inanimate things; or there is a special presence of God in creatures gifted with reason and in the state of grace. We will now expound the real manner of this *substantial and special* presence of the Holy Ghost which grace merits for the soul. We shall refrain from sacrificing either of the two conditions above named. To accomplish this we shall have only to set forth the opinion of St. Thomas, not indeed as this or that critic has understood it, but as it stands in the very words of this holy Doctor.

[4] St. Thomas, III., q. xxiii., a. 2.

According to the teaching of the Angelic Doctor, God can be *substantially* present to creatures in three different ways: as their efficient cause—the way in which He is present to all things without exception; *as the object of their knowledge and love*—the way in which He is present to the just on earth and the saints in heaven; and, finally, by the hypostatic union—the way in which the Word of God was united with our humanity in the person of Our Lord.[5]

The first of these presences is universal; it is to be found in all places where there exists an effect, natural or supernatural, of God's power. The reason for this is that all created things are essentially dependent upon God, and, therefore, can neither come into existence nor maintain themselves there independently of God's immediate action, independently of the intimate presence of their Creator. We have already sufficiently explained this mode of presence in a preceding chapter, so there is no need of enlarging further upon it.

The presence of God *as the object of knowledge and love*, is the privilege only of creatures gifted with reason, who alone are capable of knowing and loving Him. This second mode of presence, however, can assume a twofold form, that we must carefully distinguish, if we wish to avoid error, and to forestall an objection that we have already met and that is frequently used against the doctrine of St. Thomas. Either, indeed, it is question of a purely moral presence, or of an effective and real one. In the former hypothesis, all those who know and love God, would enjoy a certain kind of presence even were their knowledge and love of Him purely natural; for God is present in their intelligence by His image, His idea, as we may call it, His intellectual likeness; and in their will by an attractive force which draws them towards Him, and by a bond of affection which unites

[5] St. Thomas., I., q. viii., a. 3.

them to Him. Yet this is not in every sense a true and real presence lacking, as it does, the quality called *substantiæ*. For if it were possible for God to dwell exclusively in heaven and nowhere else, He would, nevertheless, be present in this ideal way to all those who make the Divinity the object of their reflection and affection, as is the case with mere philosophers. But when it is question of a most real and substantial presence, not only are mere natural knowledge and love incapable of drawing God into a soul, but supernatural knowledge, obtained through faith and through the love of desire which is engendered by hope—neither can these obtain such a result. Sanctifying grace and charity are alone capable of producing this effect, generating a love of God sufficiently pure and strong to do so.[6]

The third mode of presence is to be found in Christ alone—that effected by the hypostatic union, an ineffable and incomprehensible union between God and man, authorizing us to attribute to the Divine Son of God all that His human nature does or suffers; a wonderful union, indeed, since it places on each and every action and suffering of the God-Man an infinite value, thus enabling Him to satisfy in an adequate way the sin-outraged justice of God.

All three of these presences, as is plain, are found realized in Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself. God is present in Him, as in all beings, as *efficient cause*, preserving the sacred Humanity which He created and united to the Word. The Word is with Him, too, by *sanctifying grace*, as He is present to the just and to the saints. For the human soul of Christ knows and loves God with supernatural purity and force from the very first moment of its existence; that human soul knows God, not through the shadows of faith, but in the radiant light of the beatific vision; it possesses Him as

[6] St. Thomas, I., q. viii., a. 3, ad 4m.

perfectly as any creature can possess Him; the Man Christ loves Him with a love of joy (or complaisance, as it is termed) that is complete; the human soul of Christ is happy in the fullest sense of the term. Finally, as a crowning perfection added to this union already so perfect, comes the *hypostatic union* by which the Word communicates to the human nature He has assumed in the womb of the Blessed Virgin, His own substance, so that the Apostle could say that in Him "dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead corporally," [7] since this fullness of indwelling is granted not only to His soul, but also to His body.[8]

And let no one assert that the indwelling of God by grace is absolutely useless, not to say impossible, to a soul already so perfectly united to the Person of the Word as is the soul of Our Lord. The hypostatic union, indeed, without the possession of God by the acts of the intellect and the will, would not suffice *of itself* to beatify that soul. To be sovereignly happy, therefore, the soul of Christ must possess, above and beyond its union with the Word, that union with God by operation, which consists in the direct and beatific contemplation of God's essence and the enjoyment resulting therefrom. And to obtain this, His soul must be endowed with sanctifying grace, which can inform it and render it capable of eliciting supernatural acts, *i. e.*, acts that transcend all natural human powers, acts that are proper by nature to God alone.[9]

III

This doctrine of St. Thomas on the threefold way in which God can be substantially present to things, he repeats, almost verbatim, when he treats the question of

[7] Colossians ii. 9. [8] St. Thomas, III., q. ii., a. 10, ad 2.
[9] *Ibid., Disput. de Veritat.*, q. xxix., a. 1.

the various Divine missions.[10] The Angelic Doctor adds, however, one characteristic of great importance: he says that by its operation, viz., by the acts of the intellect and will, a rational being reaches out and attains to God Himself, *Sua operatione attingit ad ipsum Deum.* We shall indicate later on the signification and bearing of these words.

We cannot, however, omit mention of a masterly Article in which the Angelic Doctor gives wider scope to his thought, with explanations that bring it more within the reach of our intelligence. St. Thomas did not think it expedient to embody this Article in the works of his more mature age, which embody his doctrine. In the place at present referred to, whilst broaching the question as to whether God is in all things by His power, presence and essence—in the just by His grace, and in Christ by the Divine Being Itself, he answers as follows:

"The distinctions between these modes of presence comes in part from the creature and in part from God. . . . The creature is united to God in three ways: first, simply by likeness, for every created being possesses in itself a participation in the Divine goodness, without attaining meanwhile to possess the very substance of God; this is the ordinary mode of union, for the reason that God is in all things by His essence, His presence, and His power.

"The second mode of union between God and the creature is no longer by mere likeness, but the creature attains to God Himself, by means of his own operation; this takes place when he adheres by his faith to the primordial and Sovereign Truth, and to the Sovereign Goodness by charity. This is the second mode of union, according to which God exists in a special manner in the just in virtue of sanctifying grace.

[10] St. Thomas, I., q. xliii., a. 3.

"In the third mode of union, namely, that of Christ's humanity with the divinity, the creature attains to God no longer by its operation; but also in and by its very being . . . by a hypostatic or personal union." [11]

Such are, according to St. Thomas, the three ways in which God can be substantially present in a creature, the three kinds of union that can exist between the Creator and the work of His hand. *On the part of God:* first, union with every one of His creatures as *their efficient cause,* to preserve them and move them in each and every act; second, union with the reasonable and sanctified creature as the *object of its knowledge and love;* third, personal union with the very nature of man, effected when the Word *assumed our human nature and raised it to the dignity of a Divine Person,* thus forming that marvelous *"compositum,"* or joining together, we call the God-Man.

On the part of the creature: union of *mere likeness* with God, that is to say, by a participation in the created gifts which leave on the creature, as it were, the impress of the Divine goodness; union *by operation,* namely, by the acts of the intellect and will that enable the creature to lift itself to God the First Truth and Highest Good, to attain to Him and possess Him, and to begin here below enjoying His presence, awaiting the moment when this enjoyment shall be consummated in heaven; finally, union *in the unity of person with God,* realized, as faith teaches us, in Our Lord Jesus Christ, Whose human nature holds its existence or subsistence from the very subsistence of the Word which has been communicated to it.

These modes of presence and of union are absolutely distinct one from the other, and there exists between them not merely a difference of degree or an incidental difference, but a difference essential and specific. It is

[11] St. Thomas, *Sententiæ,* lib. I., dist. xxxvii., q. 1., a. 2.

quite different, indeed, to have God present in us merely as an efficient cause, and to possess Him in heart and mind as our last end and the object of our supreme happiness, and *a fortiori*, to form but one person with Him as in Christ Our Lord. But man endowed with grace, really possesses God in the depths of his soul; attains to the Divine substance by the exercise of his intellect and will and enjoys the possession of God.

We have dwelt at some length on these fundamental notions, for the explanations we have given were absolutely necessary to prepare the way and light our path towards the goal we have in view. He who knows that a question clearly put and its terms fully explained, is already half answered, will readily grant that what has been said is neither superfluous nor anywise useless, but the necessary preparation for further advance in the understanding of this lofty subject.

IV

Before we resume our journey, let us glance back for a moment along the road we have traveled, in order to make sure of our progress.

Acting as the interpreter of Scripture and Tradition, St. Thomas declares that God is present in the just in a new and special manner, dwelling in the sanctuary of their soul. This does not mean that He is present to preserve in them sanctifying grace and to move them in their supernatural action; most assuredly God is present in this way and for this purpose, but this is only the Divinity's common and ordinary mode of presence.

Neither does it mean that He is united to the just soul simply in close bonds of a special friendship, lavishing attentions upon it, and dealing with it as the constant object of His thought and care; if we restrict the union of God with the just merely to this, we shall be led,

willing or no, into a denial of a *real* indwelling of the Holy Ghost in them, and shall substitute for His *real* presence a merely moral union, which is as incapable of meeting the exigencies of a perfect Divine friendship as it is of satisfying fully the clear promises of the Saviour, Who affirms, that if anyone love Him, His Father will love him and all Three Divine Persons "will come to him and will make their abode with him." [12]

To characterize plainly this real union of the just with God, St. Thomas declares that God is present in them as the object of their knowledge and love. This means that through their own operations these souls can attain to the Divine substance, and commence even here below to enjoy the Sovereign Good: "God is not only said to be *in* the rational creature by this mode of union, but also to *dwell in it* as in His temple. . . . The rational soul thus sanctified does not only use the created gift [of grace], but also enjoys the Divine Person Himself." [13]

Does it suffice, however, that in order to have this special presence established one may know and love God with *any kind* of supernatural knowledge and love? By no means. The soul in mortal sin knows God not only through the light of his reason, but also through that of faith. In the same way he loves Him not only with a sort of natural love, but even with a sort of supernatural love, a love springing from the theological virtue of hope; he may even possess the germ of love enumerated by the Council of Trent among the dispositions preparatory for justification.[14] Yet God does not dwell in his soul: He is merely preparing to enter therein; He is knocking at the gate demanding entrance.[15] We have already quoted St. Thomas as saying that if even the supernatural knowledge of God, that of Divine faith, be

[12] John xiv. 23.
[13] St. Thomas, I., q. xliii., a. 3, ad 1.
[14] *Trid. Sess.* VI., c. vi.
[15] Apolcalypse iii. 20.

not accompanied by Divine charity, it is insufficient to draw the Holy Trinity into a soul. This is why he repeatedly declares that sanctifying grace alone, and no other perfection, produces this special presence of God in the soul as the object of knowledge and love.[16] Consequently, neither the supernatural virtues of faith and hope, nor the acts they prompt us to elicit, nor actual graces, nor graces *gratis datæ* like the gift of prophecy or of miracles, nor, *a fortiori*, any natural endowments, suffice to entice God into a soul in this Divine reality of presence.

That there be in the soul a real indwelling of the Holy Ghost, something more is necessary, according to St. Thomas, than the mere *action* of God producing or conserving grace; something more than supernatural habits and the actions which result from them; something more than a special Providence ruling the soul externally, however solicitous we might suppose it to be. We must have the true, real and substantial *presence* of the Holy Ghost, as the object of the soul's knowledge and love. The soul must enter into the intimate possession and fruition, at least initial, of the Supreme Good, to which it has attained through the operation of its intelligence and will under the spell of Divine grace; there must be an initiation into that blessed union of our spirit and God's Spirit (one day to be consummated in heaven) which is a foretaste of the eternal bliss above.

But is this not another enigma? And who will interpret it for us? Call it a precious formula if you will, yet it must be hard to understand, judging by the different interpretations that have been placed upon it. And where others have made mistakes, shall we be more fortunate? Where they have failed, can we boast of our ability to find the truth? If to understand and explain a dogma of so high an order, we were left to our own

[16] St. Thomas, I., q. viii., a. 3, ad 4.

meagre intelligence; if to penetrate into the depths of a mystery so far beyond our reach, we had to depend on our own unaided resources, we should certainly tremble at the words of the Holy Spirit: "Seek not the things that are too high for thee, and search not into things above thy ability." [17] Here we are face to face with that which is greatest, holiest and most profound in the mystical life of the soul; we are at the very heart of the supernatural order. This is why we hope and trust that St. Thomas, whose teachings, so far, we have in all sincerity endeavored merely to follow and to expound, will aid us from heaven, and obtain for us from God the light of which we stand in need. Relying upon his brotherly assistance and confidently imploring his intercession, we will humbly proceed, fortified with a new courage.

[17] Ecclesiasticus iii. 22.

CHAPTER IV

Explanation of the Mode or Manner of Presence With Which God Honors the Just on Earth and the Saints in Heaven

1. How God Is Present by His Substance to the Understanding and Will of the Blessed in Heaven as First Truth and as Sovereign Good

I

In his enumeration of the different ways in which God can be substantially present in creatures, St. Thomas, as we have seen, counts only three: presence as efficient cause, presence as the object of knowledge and love, and presence by the hypostatic union in Jesus Christ. Did the Angelic Doctor forget a fourth way, viz., that which is proper to the elect in heaven?[1] Indeed, it would seem that if God is to be united with certain creatures in an effective and intimate manner, it is surely with those blessed spirits who have been admitted to contemplation of Him face to face, and who have found in possessing Him their supreme happiness. But no! The Angelic Doctor has forgotten nothing, and

[1] Should he not also have added that marvelous mode of God's presence in the soul, the Eucharist? We think not. That presence is, doubtless, most real, for the Eucharist contains truly, really, and substantially, the body, the blood, the soul, and the Divinity of our Saviour (*Trid Sess.* XIII., c. i., et can. 1). But our Saviour's body and blood and soul are united to His Divinity in the Eucharist by reason of their hypostatic union with that very Divinity, as being integral parts of His humanity; and that hypostatic union of the Divinity and humanity, as it were, enchains His body and blood and soul indissolubly to His Godhead.

the enumeration he has given us is quite complete. For the union of the Divinity with the just on earth is not absolutely different in nature from that which the saints enjoy in heaven. According to the explicit declaration of Pope Leo XIII., "this wonderful union, which is properly called 'indwelling,' differs only in degree or state from that with which God beatifies the saints in heaven." [2] It differs only as the beginning of a work differs from its completion, or as the seed differs from the ripened fruit. Grace is the seed of glory; it inaugurates here below, though imperfectly, the life we are one day to have in heaven.

Now eternal life consists in knowing "the only true God, and Jesus Christ Whom He hath sent." [3] By this we mean not the intermediate, abstract and obscure knowledge of God in this life, for that we must seek in God's works [4] and in revelation; but the direct and immediate vision of God which is proper to heaven; clear, intuitive and face to face contemplation of the Divine essence; possession and fruition of the Sovereign Good. In other words, a real and substantial presence of God in the mind and heart of the beatified, as the immediate object of their knowledge and love: "as known in the one who knows and loved in the one who loves."

If, therefore, we wish to obtain an exact idea of this mode of presence, we must consider it not as it exists in its germinal and rudimentary stage in the souls of the just here on earth, but as it is in the saints in heaven, where it has reached its development. When, for example, we wish to know something of the nature of man, his faculties, operations, we do not study him in the embryonic or fœtus stage, during the first months of his existence in his mother's womb, but rather at the age of maturity when he has attained the prime of man-

[2] Encyclical, 1897, *Divinum illud munus.*

[3] John xvii. 3.

[4] Romans 1. 19, 20.

ST MICHAEL'S COLLEGE LIBRARY

hood. So let us seek to know how the Divinity is united to those blessed souls who have completed their earthly pilgrimage and are now with God.

It is a truth of our faith that the elect in heaven see God in the unity of His essence and the Trinity of His Persons, face to face, openly, clearly, intuitively and without intermediary. In this clear vision [5] and in the resultant happiness consists the crown of justice promised as the reward of our meritorious actions.[6] The question, however, is: how does such a vision, which belongs, and can naturally belong, only to God, become possible to a creature, and how will it really take place?

According to the teachings of Scholastic Philosophy, a created intellect is not and cannot be the total and exclusive efficient cause of its cognitive act. Our intellect is a passive, as well as an active, faculty. The necessity under which it labors of receiving is as great as its power to produce acts; and although it is capable of knowing each and everything, yet of itself it is indetermined and indifferent in its attitude towards this or that particular object of knowledge. Hence, the created intellect remains inactive [7] as long as it is not actuated and impregnated by something coming to it from without, an external form, which, uniting itself to the intellect in the closest of unions, perfects and determines its activity, renders it capable of eliciting the cognitive act, and becomes with it the co-principle of the mental word in and through which the faculty of knowing actually does know. This form, this determination to mental action, this actuation of the intelligence, is nothing else than the intellectual image or representation of the object that is to be known, the latter being, with few exceptions, incapable by itself of uniting directly and *per se* with the cognitive faculty. Whence the axiom,

[5] *Ex Const. Benedictus Deus*, Benedict XII., an. 1336.
[6] 2 Timothy iv. 8. [7] *Cf.* St. Thomas, I., q. lvi., a. 1.

borrowed from St. Augustine, that knowledge is the product of a twofold factor, the object and the faculty itself.[8]

The angel, perfect by nature and not passing through stages of development, receives this necessary complement to its intellect immediately from God, Who imparted to it at the moment of its creation its being and infused into it the ideal images of all things. Man, on the contrary, forced to pass through the preliminary stages of infancy, adolescence and early manhood before he attains to the perfect age in which his physical and intellectual faculties reach the apex of their development, receives this indispensable complement of his intelligence through the senses. This is what is known in Scholastic philosophy as the *species impressa* or the intelligible form of the object that is known. We may remark, however, in passing, that despite the extrinsic origin of this second element, the intellectual act does not cease to be called and to be in reality a vital act, an immanent motion, a motion from within, since the intellectual form, or the mind's image of the object known, unites with our faculty of knowing as its form in order to actuate, perfect and specify it by determining its attitude to this particular object of knowledge for the moment to no other.

Now that we have laid down the principles, we may inquire into the nature of the *species impressa* or intelligible form that will unite with our intellect in the beatific vision in heaven, and render it capable of seeing God as He is in Himself.

II

St. Thomas brings up this subject in many passages of his works, and each time his teaching is the same. He declares that no image, no created intelligible form,

[8] St. Augustine, *De Trin.*, lib. IX., c. xii., n. 18.

is capable of adequately representing the Divine essence, it being taken for granted that the latter is infinite, and that all created beings, substances or accidentals never receive from the Divine creative act, more than a restricted and finite nature, limited in each mental movement to imaging one genus and one species. Hence, the radical incapacity on the part of created beings mentally to represent in real actuality Him Who is the plenitude of being; and hence, too, the necessity for the Divine essence itself to play the part of the intelligible form, and to unite its own very Self with the intellect of a soul in the blessedness of heaven.[9] According to the Angelic Doctor, one who would pretend that God is seen by means of a mental image, a created representation or *species impressa*, would thereby deny the intuitive and real vision of God by the elect in heaven.[10] A further question, however, arises, namely, as to the possibility of this union of the Divine essence with the created intelligence. Our answer is affirmative; for God is Truth in Himself, as much as He is Being in Himself; and truth is the perfection of the intellect of man.[11] A preliminary condition, however, is requisite, viz., that the created intellect be prepared and disposed for this union by a supernatural force—a superadded perfection that will lift it above its natural condition. Before beginning, for example, to instruct a pupil in some higher study, let us say theology, or infinitesimal calculus, suitable preparation is essential to enable him to understand this teaching. Now, this force, this supernatural quality, which elevates, attunes and strengthens the soul for the blissful union in heaven, is none other than what is termed the light of glory, *lumen gloriæ*.

[9] St. Thomas, *Comp. Theol.*, Opusc. III., cap. cv.
[10] *Summa Theologica*, I., q. xii., a. 2.
[11] St. Thomas, *Comp. Theologica*, cap. cv.

Thus, according to St. Thomas, two things are necessary that the soul may see God intuitively: the *lumen gloriæ*, which strengthens, expands, and deepens the powers of the created faculty of understanding; and the direct and immediate union of the Divine essence with the intelligence of the creature destined to contemplate It.

To avoid all mistake, St. Thomas declares explicitly that in the beatific vision the Divine essence supplies for the intelligible image, the *species impressa*, without becoming, properly speaking, the form of the created intellect.[12]

There is, no doubt, then, that the Divine essence does unite directly with the intellect of the beatified soul in heaven, to form with it the co-principle of its beatific vision of the deity; and since it is the Divine essence such a soul contemplates, this essence is at the same time the terminus and the object of this vision. The Divine essence, therefore, is at once the alpha and the omega, the principle and terminus of the vital operation constituting the happiness of the saints in heaven.

How then can we fail to recognize between the Divinity and the elect in heaven a real and true union, since God can be seen and possessed only on condition that He be present to the minds of the elect Himself and not merely by His image, *per suam essentiam et non per speciem essentiæ repræsentativam;* a special union altogether distinct from that which He can and does make with other creatures, since He is present to the elect not merely as an efficient cause of action, but also and especially as the object of their knowledge and love, that is to say of their intuitive knowledge and beatific love; finally, a union which, although not resulting in a unity of substance, but safeguarding the twofold personality of God and the creature, neverthe-

[12] St. Thomas, *Qq. disp., de verit*, q. viii., n. 1.

less establishes such intimate relations between them that one becomes the beatitude and supreme perfection of the other.

What will be this vision of God and this contemplation of the infinite Beauty, what joy, what sweetness, what delights it will bring to the soul—no one knows except Him Who bestows it and him who receives it.[13] Inspired writers, to whom the Holy Ghost revealed something of its splendor, tell us that it will be the complete fulfillment of all our desires,[14] a torrent of delights that will not only fill our hearts, but will flood them to overflowing.[15] It will certainly not be a dry, cold knowledge like the feeble ray of a winter's sun, but an ardent, ecstatic knowledge, that will beget in the will an immense, irresistible and uninterrupted love, and a happiness limited only by the capacity of our heart.

III

And, of course, God could not be substantially present to the intelligence of the elect and yet absent from their will. Does not that which takes place in one faculty react upon the other? Or, in other words, does not that which takes place in the order of knowledge necessarily find its echo in the order of love and is it not perfect and irresistible in heaven?[16] Love naturally follows knowledge, and union is the usual consequence of love. Since, then, the Saints see God face to face, they find themselves in the happy *necessity* of loving Him.

All this is perfectly true; for how could the Saints stay the irresistible inclination their will experiences to soar up to Him Whom their intellect so clearly beholds and presents to the will as the Sovereign Good? And since they possess Him without fear of ever losing Him, how could they fail to find in God the source of their

[13] Apocalypse ii. 17. [14] Psalm cii. 5. [15] Psalm xxv. 9.
[16] St. Thomas, *Summa Theologica*, I., q. lxxx., a. 1.

supreme happiness? And we cannot feel joy if the object loved be not really present. Therefore, if God really unites with the intellect of the saints as the object of knowledge, He must also, and *a fortiori*, really and effectively unite with their will as the object of love, for "Love is more unitive than knowledge." [17] Besides, a mere union of affection would be absolutely insufficient to produce perfect, consummate happiness such as the beatitude of heaven supposes.

Not that the union of affection does not exist—since the blessed love God and are loved by Him, and that love consists formally in the moral bond which draws together and unites two hearts. But love tends to real union, and attains to this union in the measure of fully realizing all its possibility. Then again, according as the union is actual, or only merely affective, we have two different kinds of love: the first a love of gratification, the other a love of desire. Now the love of gratification alone reigns in heaven, since all desire there finds fulfillment. There we shall see Him in Whom we have believed; we shall possess Him in Whom we have hoped and Whom we sought after while in this world; we shall at last enjoy fully, without fear of loss, and for all eternity, Him Who is the supreme Good. Then will the work of our deification be complete; then shall we be perfectly like unto God, imbued through and through with Him—divinized.

Even here below we possess a certain likeness with God, having within us that most excellent boon of grace which makes us formal "partakers of the Divine nature," [18] we are already His sons by adoption, and possessing a right to our Father's inheritance. Yet the last word on our destiny has not been spoken in this life, and "it hath not appeared what we shall be." [19]

[17] St. Thomas, I., II., q. xxviii., a. 1, ad 3. [18] 2 Peter i. 4.
[19] 1 John iii. 2.

When God shall reveal Himself to us fully, sweeping away every shadow and drawing every veil; when we shall see Him unobscured, face to face; when He will appear to us as He is; then shall we be made fully like unto Him. We shall live of His life, knowing and loving Him—although in a finite and limited manner—as He knows and loves Himself: "We see now through a glass, in a dark manner; but then face to face. Now I know in part; but then I shall know even as I am known." [20] For the intimate life of God consists in the knowledge and love He has of His own Being and His own infinite perfections, and in that life it shall be our privilege to share.

Once this end shall have been reached, our desire to know will be fully satisfied, our thirst after happiness completely appeased; for the Divine essence, united with our intellect, will be a principle competent to enable us to know all truth; and possessing the very source of all goodness and bounty we shall have nothing more to desire. St. Thomas, therefore, says: "We shall know God in the manner and mode in which He knows Himself, namely, by and through His essence: even though we cannot *comprehend* Him as He comprehends Himself: not that we shall fail to know any part of Him, for He has no parts; but that we shall not know Him as perfectly as He is knowable." [21]

Then will receive its complete fulfillment that prayer which Our Lord, on the eve of His death, put up for His disciples and for all those who were to believe in Him in the course of ages: "Holy Father, keep them in Thy name, whom Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, as We also are. . . . That they all may be one, as Thou, Father, in Me, and I in Thee; that they also may be one in Us; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me. And the glory which Thou hast given Me, I

[20] 1 Corinthians xiii. 12. [21] St. Thomas, *Comp. Theologica*, ch. cvi.

have given to them that they may be one as We also are one; I in them, and Thou in Me; that they may be made perfect in one." [22] Union, therefore—union of all with God, union of all in God, union at last consummated in glory—this is the supreme wish of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, a wish that even in this life shall have received, through grace and charity, its first fulfillment.

Will anyone now affirm that a real, substantial presence of God in the soul can exist without God's being the object of knowledge and love? And those who failed to understand why this presence should be real and effective and not limited to a merely objective and moral union—will they be more satisfied now? We venture to believe that the difficulties so often raised have now vanished as by enchantment, and that the reader who has been patient enough to follow us thus far, is now in a position to understand the meaning and full bearing of the words of St. Thomas: "By the operation of the creature's reason, that is to say of his knowledge and love, he reaches the very substance of God; and that is why, that instead of saying that God is in the soul only by mode of a special presence, we also say that He dwells there as in His temple." [23]

One will understand, too, why the Angelic Doctor repeatedly asserts in this place and elsewhere, that sanctifying grace alone can produce this special mode of presence. The obvious reason is that the mere natural knowledge we have of God, is indirect and abstractive, and therefore does not render God veritably present to our soul. Without sanctifying grace He is present only by the concept we form of Him and, therefore, in a purely ideal and objective way and not in a strictly real and effective way.

Through faith, it is true, we come to know God more perfectly than through reason, for faith introduces us

[22] John xvii. 11-23. [23] St. Thomas, I., q. xliii., a. 3.

even into the secrets of His intimate life, but yet in an obscure and partial manner. Yet faith without charity does not suffice to render God truly and every way present to our intellect, nor make Him dwell within us. What the sinner who still retains faith possesses, is not God Himself but only the idea of God, that is to say the concept which represents God. Sanctifying grace alone (and especially when it has reached its zenith and its fullest development, as is the case with the saints in heaven), claims, demands, produces the real, true, substantial presence of God in the soul of the blessed as the term of its knowledge and love; that is to say the presence of the Divine essence in its intelligence, to fit it to see God as He is; the presence of the supreme Good in the will, that it may enjoy God and delight in His possession.

CHAPTER V

Explanation of the Special Mode or Manner of Presence With Which God Honors the Just on Earth and the Saints in Heaven

(Continued)

How Grace Produces in the Souls of the Just on Earth a Divine Presence Analogous to That Enjoyed by the Saints in Heaven

I

The question to be answered in this chapter is: Can we rightly apply to the just here on earth what we predicate of the saints in heaven, and affirm that grace produces in them a real and special presence of God as the object of their knowledge and love? Is it not manifest that there is a fundamental difference between these two states, and therefore is it not manifest that the Divine essence does not directly and *immediately* unite with the intellect of souls who are still on the road to God—as we have stated it does for those who now comprehend Him in heaven—to be the principle and the terminus of an intuitive knowledge? And if the case were otherwise, would we not see God now face to face, and would not faith have given place to perfect and beatific vision?

In answer we have to claim, that although we admit

with the Apostle that our *actual* knowledge of God here below is essentially obscure, and that we see Him only, as it were, "through a glass and in a dark manner," [1] yet we must not and we do not conclude from this that God does not truly honor us, even in this life, with a special and substantial presence, such as is indicated by Holy Scripture and Tradition as the privilege of all souls in the state of grace. To deny this privilege to God's friends on earth, would be to disregard altogether the loftiness of our vocation, and the inestimable treasures God bestows, even in this life, on His adopted children by sending them His Holy Spirit. In what, then, does this union of God with our souls in this present life consist? This is the question we must now endeavor to answer, although we have already to some extent treated of it.

According to a teaching borrowed from the Holy Scriptures by the Angelic Doctor, grace is nothing else than the commencement in us of the future glory of heaven.[2] Consequently, we have already received germinally and in an initial way what will one day constitute our eternal happiness. And since eternal happiness consists in the act by which the rational creature enters into possession and enjoyment of the Sovereign Good, the just soul, also, must even in this life attain to the Divine substance, and through its own responsive operation come into real contact with the Divinity through knowledge and love, and here on earth *begin* to enjoy God as do the blessed in heaven. This is what is effected by that experimental and sensible knowledge which is the fruit of the Gift of Wisdom, but especially by the love which is supernatural charity. Such knowledge and love, however, do not suppose what is properly called *vision;* nor *integral* and *complete* enjoyment; yet

[1] 1 Corinthians xiii. 12.
[2] St. Thomas, II., II., q. xxiv., a. 3, ad 2.

it is truly the real and sensible presence of the Divine object known and loved.

This, it is true, is to the soul's gaze but a luminous point in space, its light is very faint; and the rank and file of devout Christians barely perceive it. Yet if the forester who plants an acorn does not comprehend and appreciate that it is the product of a stately oak and contains a living principle of reproduction, how can he be expected, by simply looking at it, to forecast what a marvelous tree it will one day become. Now, according to St. Peter, grace is a seed: "Being born again not of corruptible seed, but incorruptible, by the word of God, Who liveth and remaineth forever [3]—a precious and incorruptible germ of Divine life, destined to bloom forth in the sun of eternity, although now it possesses only in a rudimentary way the rich fruitage it is destined to yield. The indwelling of the Holy Ghost, which is the necessary consequence of grace in our souls, is called a germ of future glory by St. John also: "Dearly beloved, we are *now* the sons of God, and it hath not yet appeared what we *shall be*." [4] This explains why St. Paul, in speaking of the glory that is to come, almost without exception uses the word revelation: "The glory to come, that shall be revealed in us." [5] One day the darkness that now closes in around us will be dispelled, the clouds that hide from our eyes the mysteries of the supernatural life will be brushed aside, and we shall then know fully, and with sentiments of inexpressible admiration and ineffable gratitude, the treasure that, nevertheless, even now lies unsuspected in the depths of our heart.

In the meantime, we have the torch of faith and the light of revelation to guide us through the darkness of the present night, and we must not lose sight of them, according to the recommendation of St. Peter: "And

[3] 1 Peter i. 23. [4] 1 John iii. 2. [5] Romans viii. 18.

we have the more firm prophetical word; whereunto you do well to attend, as to a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts." [6]

It is thus the word of God itself which teaches us and certifies unto us, that with and through sanctifying grace the Holy Ghost is sent to us and is given to us; that He dwells in us and wills to remain always with us; so that we may commence here below and immediately to enjoy His Divine Person. But enjoyment supposes a real presence of the object loved, according to the saying of St. Bonaventure: "By sanctifying grace the created soul is perfected to that degree, that not only it freely enjoys the created gift of grace, but also the Divine Person Himself; to that end the presence of that object must be real and effective." [7] Therefore at the moment of our justification we receive a twofold charity: the one created, the other uncreated; the one through which we love God, the other through which we are loved by Him; the one which belongs to the three theological virtues, the other which is the very Person of the Holy Ghost Himself.

God is therefore really and substantially present to the Christian in the state of grace. His presence is not merely a presence, but a real possession, which already begins to bear fruit of enjoyment. It is a union far superior to that which binds unsanctified beings to their Creator; our union is surpassed only by the union of the two natures in the Person of the Incarnate Word; a union which, when fervently cultivated, is so blissful as to be in the true sense of the word a foretaste of heaven's joys, a prelude to happiness eternal. St. Thomas is not afraid, therefore, to assert that there is an imperfect inception in this life itself, of the future

[6] 2 Peter i. 19.

[7] St. Bonaventure, *Comp. Theologica verit.* I. 1, c. ix.

happiness of the saints, and he compares it to the buds which are the promise and the earnest of the coming harvest.[8] In speaking this way he probably expresses what he himself and the other great servants of God who speak a similar language have experienced. One has only to read the works of St. Teresa, especially the *Interior Castle,* to be convinced that this noble mistress of mystical science shared completely the opinion of the Angelic Doctor. Such is the Divine mystery every Christian in the state of grace carries in his bosom, and which is the very foundation of the Christian life. Let us endeavor to delve a little more deeply into this consoling truth.

II

According to St. Thomas, sanctifying grace establishes between God and the soul of the just a true and perfect friendship by means of charity.

As a matter of fact, three things are necessary to establish friendship between two beings. First, the affection which unites them must be true charity, namely, the love of well-wishing, called that of benevolence, stimulating each to wish, to desire, and to do well to the other, and to seek not one's own personal advantage, but only the well-being of the person loved. Secondly, such love must be mutual; and, finally, it must be founded on a certain common possession of good things, for example, based on a likeness of character or of condition of life. Indeed, union presupposes resemblance, the latter being in the moral order what affinity is in the physical. Whence the adage, that friendship either supposes or produces a certain likeness between those whom it binds together: *Amicitia, aut pares invenit aut facit.* And in so far as the good

[8] St. Thomas, I., II., q. lxix., a. 2.

things which we possess are held in common with others, so are the different kinds of friendship distinguished one from another; fraternal love rising from blood kinship, conjugal love founded on common life and mutually common rights, the love of patriotism based on having a common motherland.

Whosoever, then, possesses supernatural charity, which is the inseparable companion of sanctifying grace, loves God for His own sake with a love supreme, and is in turn loved by God: "I love them who love." [9]

What an astonishing thing it is, this mutual love of Creator and creature! What more natural or more conformable to Divine law and to the motions of our heart, than that we should love God—infinite beauty that He is, inexhaustible goodness, veritable ocean of all perfections. But for this infinite Being to value our love, not merely permitting us to love Him, but inviting us in words overflowing with tenderness—as when He said: "My son, give Me thy heart," [10] and again: "My delights are to be with the children of men" [11]—aye, for God to bind us to love Him by the first of all His Commandments, the one which sums up all the rest, and along with this to promise us an infinite reward—this indeed ought to be enough to overpower us with amazement. Job could not understand it, and he cries out to God: "What is man that Thou shouldst magnify him, and the son of man that Thou shouldst set Thy heart upon him!" [12] And the great bishop of Hippo: "O Lord, what am I in Thy eyes that Thou shouldst command me to love Thee, that Thy anger should be enflamed against me, and that Thou shouldst threaten me with frightful torments if I refuse Thee my love—as if it were not misery enough if I did not love Thee." [13]

We can well understand how God requires our adora-

[9] Proverbs viii. 17. [10] Proverbs xxiii. 26. [11] Proverbs viii. 31.
[12] Job vii. 17. [13] St. Augustine, *Confessions*, lib. I., c. v.

tion and homage, as something due to a being of supreme perfection. So, too, the privilege of serving Him is sufficiently explained, on one hand by His infinite condescension in accepting our service, and on the other by the very fact that we are His creatures. But is it not an inordinate ambition, of the wildest dream, or the vaguest myth, to believe that God shall draw us to Himself by the bands of closest familiarity, the links of entire intimacy; in a word, by the strong ties of perfect friendship? If in the society of men friendship, properly speaking, between master and servant finds no place on account of the lack of equality, how can it become possible between the Master of masters and us His miserable creatures? Is there not a saying now come to be a proverb, that majesty and love never go hand in hand and are never seated upon the same throne? Majesty bids one stay at a distance while love beckons and draws one near; majesty inspires us with awe and fear, while love banishes fear, inviting and promoting familiarity and unconstraint. How, therefore, are we to reconcile things which are so unlike that they seem incompatible one with the other, except by the mystery of our transformation by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Then again, what can God find in us to love, and what is there in us that makes Him seek after our love? What need has He of us, and what can He gain in loving us? Can we suppose that the creature is indispensable to God, to satisfy that longing of the heart and provide for that sweet and much coveted pleasure of loving and of knowing that one is loved? Anyone rash enough to suppose all this, to him the Psalmist would reply: "I have said to the Lord Thou art my God, because Thou hast no need of my goods." [14] And in all truth God is fully sufficient unto Himself, in Him is all

[14] Psalm xv. 2.

good, beauty, joy and happiness. The Father loves the Son Whom He hath begotten with an infinite love; the Son loves the Father with an equal love; and the result of this twofold love is the very Person of the Holy Ghost, Who is Infinite Love divinely subsistent. Before the world was, before the angels, first creatures of God's hand, had begun their canticle of praise in honor of the Most High, when God was alone, He saw, contemplated and divinely uttered Himself in His Word Whom He begot by communicating to Him His own nature. Then transported at the sight of their common ineffable beauty, He rested with infinite complacency in this Word, embracing Him with a peaceful, ardent and divinely living embrace, namely, the Holy Ghost. Thus God was in Himself and of Himself sovereignly, ineffably and infinitely blessed.[15]

It is not out of need of love, therefore, that God exacts of man the tribute of his heart, neither is it to increase, and still less, to procure His own bliss, that God loves us and demands that we love Him in return. He acts in this way solely out of His infinite bounty, to make manifest His perfections by communicating them to creatures, and to secure His glory through their happiness. For just as the sun bestows the rays of its light, and the flower gives forth the breath of its fragrance without any advantage resulting to them therefrom, but to the great benefit of those who receive them, so God, by nature eminently generous and communicative, wishes only to distribute His gifts to others, and make them share in His happiness. If, therefore, He demands that we love Him, it is not because He secures thereby some advantage for Himself, but because, in thus acting conformably to the order and nature of things, *we* obtain untold benefits. His intention, therefore, is that, whilst serving and loving Him, we shall store up for ourselves

[15] *Conc. Vatic.*, Const. *Dei Filius*, c. 1.

treasures of merit, and become daily more and more worthy of one day sharing in His own eternal beatitude.

And yet, granted that God loves us and wishes us to love Him; that this mutual love is not only possible, but actually does exist between the Godhead and the soul in the state of grace, where are we to find the third element of friendship, namely, this community of goods, this likeness of state or life, this equality which friendship presupposes and demands? Is there anything common between the Creator and the creature? Are they not infinitely distant one from the other, and separated by an impassable abyss? All this is true, for God is great, immense, infinite; and His creature is puny, insignificant and almost bordering on nothingness. And yet, O marvel of Divine wisdom! God has discovered a means of drawing together terms that are so far apart; and what wisdom conceived, love hath put into effect.

That we might become His friends, God was pleased to humble Himself—the Apostle says, "to empty Himself"—stooping down to raise us up to Him. By His Incarnation, He was "made in the likeness of man, and in habit found as a man." [16] He took upon Himself our poverty and our miseries; that "through His poverty we might be rich." [17] He communicated to us most great and precious promises, that by these we might be made "partakers of the Divine nature," [18] bestowing upon us the title and rank of adopted children,[19] with a right to Our Father's eternal inheritance.

This is why Holy Church, unable to contain her admiration at the sight of such condescending bounty, exclaims with the accents of fervent enthusiasm in the Divine Office for the feast of the Circumcision: "O wonderful exchange! The Creator of the human race has deigned to take to Himself a body and a soul, and of

[16] Philippians ii. 6, 7.
[17] 2 Corinthians viii. 9.
[18] 2 Peter i. 4.
[19] 1 John iii. 1.

a Virgin mother to be born a man without human seed, bestowing upon us His own Divinity."

We read in the Old Testament of King Alexander wishing to honor the son of Mathathias with his friendship. He began by making him a high priest of the nation, sending him a purple robe and a crown of gold with these words: "Thou art fit to be our friend." [20] In like manner, God is able, without detracting from His own dignity, to unite Himself with us through the ties of friendship, ever since by the most unexpected mystery of the Divine condescension, He has made us "fellow-citizens with the saints, and the domestics of God." [21] Yea, "for we are also His offspring." [22]

III

In supernatural charity therefore, we find realized all the conditions requisite for true and perfect friendship between God and man; what is here meant by charity is that love peculiarly termed benevolence; it is mutual love; it is a love based upon community of nature; and it is a love that is the pledge of that community of beatitude that will one day be shared with God's own in heaven.

Since this charity then is friendship in the full sense of the term, it should have the prerogatives of friendship and answer all its needs. Now what does friendship require? What kind of union does it exact between those whom it draws together? Is it satisfied with mere identity of thoughts and wishes, community of earthly possessions and some kind of bond of affection? Is this the object of its aims and the final term of all its aspirations? Most surely not; what friendship desires and demands, what it tends towards with all its strength, and what it actually brings about within the limits of possibility, is real and intimate union, life

[20] Machabees x. 19. [21] Ephesians ii. 19. [22] Acts xvii. 28.

in a common and mutual enjoyment of the persons who love.

And since, according to the judicious remark of St. Thomas, love as defined by St. Dionysius is a unitive force, it is therefore of the very essence of love to tend towards union; and hence again, the more perfect the love, the more perfect the union. Now two kinds of union can exist between friends; the one purely *affective* and *moral*, consisting in an habitual inclination or attraction by which we are drawn towards the person beloved, which constantly reminds us of him and causes us to experience joy and delight in thinking of him; the other is *effective*, and it is more *real*. It is when those who love are actually present one to the other and can live and converse together.

In human friendships, real union, life in common, can be desired, coveted and eagerly sought after; but these conditions are not often realized. The duties of one's state, business, health and the thousand other necessities of life often impose a painful and more or less prolonged separation upon those whose hearts are closely united; and such persons are glad if only from time to time they can see and converse with one another. With God, on the contrary, nothing is impossible, and neither time nor distance nor anything else is an obstacle for Him. Since therefore His sovereignly efficacious love can effect without difficulty whatever it desires, are we not justified in concluding that the love God bears for the just soul places Him, so to speak, under the obligation of entering in Person into that soul, of taking up His abode within it, and of always granting it the consolation of His presence?

Is this not what the beloved disciple meant when he exclaimed: "He that abideth in charity abideth in God." [23] Is it not also what Our Saviour promised

[23] 1 John iv. 16.

when He said: "If any man love Me, he will keep My Commandments, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and make Our abode with him." [24]

How then can it still be objected that this effective and actual presence of the Beloved One does not belong to this land of exile, but is reserved for the moment we enter our eternal and blissful home; that in the meantime simply a moral presence, a union of heart and affection suffices to answer the exigencies of friendship here below; just as a loving and tenderly beloved mother is always present to her son as the object of his knowledge and love, although physically she may be separated far from him; present to his memory by her sweet image; present to his heart by an indefinable complacency which fills him with delight; an invincible charm which draws him towards her? Of course, all this is true of our thoughts about God; He does not suffer Himself to be separated from anyone who possesses charity, but is at once the constant object of this person's thoughts and the centre of his affections. The pious soul can find no sweeter pleasure than to love Him, speak to Him, and express his love, and converse familiarly with Him, for "His conversation hath no bitterness, nor His company any tediousness, but joy and gladness." [25] Too much praise cannot be given to the joys of this moral presence. Not being able to give anything to the One it loves, since He is the fullness of being and of all perfection, the soul makes amends for its utter inability by delighting in the happiness of its Beloved, rejoicing at the thought that He possesses all things, that He is the Sovereign Good, that He is God. The soul then identifies itself, as it were, with God, espouses His interests with even more zeal than if they were its own, labors with all its might to extend and advance His kingdom, to see that His holy will is done and

[24] John xiv. 23. [25] Wisdom viii. 16.

His glory secured. It rejoices when it beholds Him honored, served and loved, it is grieved when His Supreme Majesty is offended, it is sensitive to everything relating to Him.

Then in return what zeal, devotedness and tenderness does not God display as the true Friend of the just soul? He enlightens it in its doubts and difficulties, sustains it in its moments of weakness, encourages it in its good efforts, defends it against its enemies, and comforts it in its sorrow and distress, oftentimes conducting it to those mysterious chambers where it may drink deep of the generous wine of holy charity. It is there that the soul, flooded with purest delights, cries out with the spouse of the Canticles: "I found Him Whom my soul loveth; I held Him, and will not let Him go." [26]

What more than this merely moral presence could a person desire in this world? Accordingly, St. Paul asks us to rejoice not simply and solely in the effective and literal *possession* of the Sovereign Good, but to be happy in the mere hope of one day attaining it: "Rejoicing in hope." [27]

Thus also the Angelic Doctor: "Herein is seen how appropriate is mutual converse to the union between friend and friend. But the converse of man with God is by contemplating Him, and so teaches the Apostle: 'Our conversation is in heaven' (Philippians iii. 20). The Spirit having made us lovers of God, it follows that thereby, and by the same Holy Spirit, we are constituted contemplators of God." [28]

Surely such moral union with God, through contemplating Him and loving Him, is a treasure we could never have dreamed of possessing.

And yet God was not content with this, and His love led Him to do still greater things.

[26] Canticles iii. 4. [27] Romans xii. 12.
[28] St. Thomas, *Contra Gent.*, IV., c. xxii.

IV

If charity were like the virtues of faith and hope, which by their very nature suppose an object that is absent and far-removed—the object of faith being that which is not seen and the object of hope that which is not possessed—we should have to be reconciled to our fate and patiently await the real possession of God until the day of our entrance into heaven. But the charity bestowed by sanctifying grace, far from supposing its principal object absent and removed, implies by its very existence the presence and possession of this object, since such a charity can be nothing less than the love of what is already possessed. This is why it is the greatest of the theological virtues: "Now there remaineth faith, hope, and charity, these three; but the greater of these is charity," [29] not because its object is superior to that of the other two, since all three are directed towards God, but because it brings us into essentially closer union with Him.

No doubt all our spiritual wealth in this life will appear as poverty, and our union with God, however intimate, as estrangement and exile, if compared with the full possession of God and the supreme felicity that is to be our lot for all eternity. This is what caused the Apostle to exclaim, in mournful accents: "Knowing that while we are in the body, we are absent from the Lord;" [30] this is also the reason why he desired "to be dissolved and to be with Christ." [31] It is not less true, however, that even during this time of our probation, the grace of charity unites us directly and immediately with God, since even here below God "is truly present to those who love Him by the indwelling of His grace." [32]

There is nothing strange about all this, for is not the

[29] 1 Corinthians xiii. 13. [30] 2 Corinthians v. 6. [31] Philippians i. 23.
[32] St. Thomas, *Summa Theologica*, II., II., 9, xxviii., a. 1, ad 1.

charity of this life the same in all reality as that which will exist in heaven? Faith will one day disappear before the bright rays of perfect vision, just as dawn is banished by the rising sun; hope with its longings will yield to the final possession of our last end, for we no longer hope for what we possess and enjoy; [33] we speak, of course, of the knowledge and the hope such as we are able to acquire in this world. This knowledge and hope is necessarily imperfect. All that we know about God and all our trust in Him at this present moment, and all that it ever will become here below, is infinitely less than what He is really worthy of and really is: "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part." [34]

When the solemn moment of the great revelation shall have come, when the veil which conceals the Divinity from our view shall have been lifted, when we shall have attained to the perfect state, all this imperfect and incomplete knowledge shall suddenly vanish away. It will be sudden exchange of infancy for manhood: "But when that which is perfect hath come, that which is in part shall be made void." [35] But "Charity never falleth away." [36] Its flame will then shine brightly in presence of the Sovereign Good, its fervor will burn with immense increase, its nature will undergo no change. Charity will then mean true, perfect and consummate union of the creature's will with the Sovereign Good. Is it not quite natural, therefore, that even here below it should require the real and substantial presence of the Holy Ghost in the soul as the object of its joy and love, since it is for this very reason that He is now given to us?

Whosoever realizes that, although the *knowledge* we have of God in this life (which is but the way to heaven), does not essentially differ from that to be ours finally in

[33] 1 Corinthians xiii. 8.
[34] 1 Corinthians xiii. 9.
[35] 2 Corinthians xiii. 9.
[36] *Ibid.*, 8.

heaven, must also realize that there is no such difference between the *charity* of heaven and that of earth; there is only a difference of degree. We must inevitably draw that conclusion. And though we are here below incapable of *knowing God* in His essence and as He is, yet we can *love* Him in Himself directly and immediately. Nay, it is not impossible to find here on earth certain souls who, though encompassed by the shadows of faith, are, as theologians teach, yet possessed of an habitual charity greater than that of many angels in heaven. This must be the case; since after their death such holy souls are to be raised above several of the angelic choirs, some even being placed by God among the seraphim themselves. Nevertheless, however perfect their habitual charity may be on earth, it has less *intensity* than that of the latest saint admitted to the face-to-face contemplation of God.

Since this is the case, who will be surprised to hear St. Thomas affirm that "the saints enjoy even in this life an imperfect commencement of the beatitude of heaven." [87] And if this be true, the Holy Ghost must be united to such souls as their Guest, their Friend and their tender Spouse. He must truly dwell in their heart as in a living temple, to receive their homage and adoration, and He must surrender His very self to them in all reality, to become the source of their joy and happiness. Thus the exactitude of the expression employed by St. Thomas is practically verified, when, to characterize this special presence of God in the souls in the state of grace, he declares that the Holy Spirit dwells in them "as the actual object of their love."

St. Thomas teaches, as we have seen, that not every kind of knowledge, even though it be supernatural, shows the effective presence of the Holy Ghost. Thus the knowledge of God we obtain through faith does not

[87] St. Thomas, I., II., q. lxix., a. 2.

suffice to have Him dwell in all reality in our souls. That there be a supernal transmission, a donation, and consequently an indwelling of the Three Divine Persons in a soul, no ordinary and wholly theoretical knowledge suffices. For this indwelling, our knowledge must emanate from a Gift appropriate to the Person Who is sent to us, binding us to this Person and rendering us like unto Him. It must be a sort of experimental knowledge acquired only through an intimate and loving union with God. And this knowledge is the fruit of the Gift of Wisdom, concerning which we shall have more to say later on.

We can know, for instance, theoretically, or from hearsay, the approximate taste of a certain fruit, without ever having eaten of it or perhaps without ever having seen it; we cannot, however, be said to know it experimentally until we have really tasted it for ourselves In like manner, so long as it is question of knowing God in a speculative way, His real and actual presence is not necessary. His image alone suffices. As soon, however, as we wish to know Him experimentally, that is, to taste, relish and delight in His Divine sweetness, the purely *ideal* presence of His Person no longer suffices, but a real, true and substantial presence becomes indispensable. Now it is precisely in order that we may delight in the possession of their Divine Persons that the Son and the Holy Ghost are sent and given to us, and that the Father comes to us with them. "We can have the Three Divine Persons within us," says St. Thomas, "so that we may enjoy their presence in two ways; either in an absolutely perfect manner—and that is what constitutes eternal glory—or in an imperfect way, and that is the fruit of sanctifying grace." [38]

In giving themselves to and in imprinting themselves upon our souls, the Three Divine Persons bestow on us

[38] St. Thomas, *Sententiæ*, I., dist. xiv., q. ii., a. 2, ad 2.

certain Gifts which are the formal or formative principles of the gratification we experience in possessing God. We have already mentioned Charity and the Gift of Wisdom: Charity makes us like unto the Holy Spirit, Who is love uncreated; Wisdom gives us a certain resemblance with the Word of God, by means of which we are able to know God after a manner similar to that by which He knows Himself, namely, through a knowledge which blossoms into love. The Word of God, which is the term or end of the Paternal knowledge, is not any kind of a word, but a Word that is productive of love, *spirans amorem.*

Here is an analogy that will help us to understand in what our experimental knowledge of God (the Gift and consequence of grace) consists. Our soul in its present condition of union with the body, cannot know itself directly and intuitively, since it does not see its own substance. It can, however, argue to its existence from the acts which flow from it as from their principle and source.

Nevertheless there is a great difference between the way in which the soul knows itself, and the way in which it knows other souls. If we wish to prove the existence of our neighbor's soul, we have only to argue from the external acts we behold him perform: vital movements, acts of understanding and will, etc.; and our conclusion is that our fellow-man is possessed of a living, intellectual, and free principle, the source and root of all his activities. When it is question, on the other hand, of proving the existence of our own soul, the process is an entirely different one. Not being able to reach our soul directly, we must again, of course, follow the deductive method; but then instead of taking as the sole basis of our argument the external manifestations of our principle of life, we may rely upon data of *conscience* and other facts of the *internal* order of life,

since here we do not merely behold life, but feel it within us, being conscious of our thoughts, our desires, and all those movements of which we are at once the witness and the author. In this way we acquire a kind of experimental knowledge of the principle of these acts, knowledge which is indirect, obscure and deductive, if you will, but which differs singularly from the exclusively theoretical knowledge we obtain of the existence of the soul of our neighbor. Hence the words of St. Thomas, "the soul knows itself through its presence." [39]

Now the same may be said, in due proportion, of the manner in which we know that God is present in the depths of our heart. We not only know theoretically that God dwells in the souls of the just, but through the Gift of Wisdom we taste the very sweetness of this presence. And although no one can, without a special revelation, have absolute certitude that the Holy Ghost dwells within him—"since no one knows with the certitude of faith which does not admit of error, whether or not he is in the state of grace" [40]—nevertheless we are not condemned to complete ignorance touching this question. Does not the Apostle teach that "the Spirit Himself giveth testimony to our spirit, that we are the sons of God?" [41] not that the Holy Ghost speaks to us in human speech, but, as St. Thomas remarks, He communicates with us "through the existence of the filial love which He has produced within our souls." [42]

We do not behold the Guest of our soul; an impervious veil conceals the splendor of His presence from our gaze, and we are separated from the Beloved One by the dividing wall of our flesh. This is why the creature groans within us "yearning for the adoption of

[39] St. Thomas, *Summa Theologica*, I., q. lxxxvii., a. 1.
[40] Council of Trent, session VIII., ch. ix.
[41] Romans viii. 16. [42] St. Thomas, in *Epist. ad Rom.*, viii., lect. 3.

sons." [43] But yet it is not so much a wall or partition as it is a lattice through which He looks upon us: "Behold [Our Beloved] standeth behind our wall, looking through the windows, looking through the lattices." [44] And when, in His infinite goodness, He spiritually extends to us His hand and makes us feel more intimately the reality of His presence, our hearts are transported with joy.

In an endeavor to make clearer this truth, St. Teresa uses a very ingenious comparison. She is speaking of one who has been favored with a very vivid sense of the Divine presence in a high state of contemplation and presently is dropped into an ordinary spiritual condition: "It is with such a soul as with a person shut up in a well-lighted room with some others, and suddenly all the lights are extinguished; he can no longer see his associates. But he is none the less certain that he has seen them and that they are present. Let me add that such a soul cannot fail of an *ordinary* feeling that God is with him interiorly, and just as strongly as during His very supernatural manifestations." [45]

If you ask by what signs the presence and action of the Holy Spirit may be recognized, St. Bernard, speaking from experience, answers thus: "By the stirring of my heart have I known His presence; by the rising tide of my hatred of vice and of carnal affections; by the stinging reproaches addressed to my innermost soul about even my most hidden faults; by the amendment of my life; and by the renovation of my interior man. . . . How can I recognize the presence of Him Whose ways are unsearchable? As soon as He enters He awakens my sleeping soul; He touches and softens and wounds my heart, though it be hard as a stone; He begins to tear out what is evil in me—He destroys and builds up and plants; He waters and fertilizes what is dry and

[43] Romans viii. 23. [44] Canticles v. 9. [45] *Interior Castle*, ch. 1.

barren; He lights up what is encompassed with darkness; He unlocks what is bolted against Him: thus it is that I recognize the Spouse as He enters my soul." [46]

St. Thomas declares that, apart from private revelations, which are purely a gratuitous privilege, there are three signs by which we can know whether or not God is actively present in the depths of our heart: the testimony of one's conscience, when one truly feels that he loves God and is ready, with the help of His grace, to suffer and to sacrifice all things rather than offend Him; and eagerness to listen to, and especially to put into practice, the teachings of the Word of God: "He that is of God heareth the Word of God;" [47] finally, I know God by that interior delight in the Divine Wisdom, which is, as it were, a foretaste of the happiness of heaven.

The soul who exclaimed: "O, how good and sweet is Thy Spirit, O Lord, in all things!" [48] must have tasted this Divine sweetness; and St. Augustine, who could appreciate these spiritual delights, could not refrain from crying out: "Who will grant me, O my God, this boon that Thou wilt come into my heart, and inebriate it, so that I may forget evil things, and embrace Thee the one only Good!" [49]

VI

God is therefore really and substantially present in every soul endowed with grace and charity, as its Guest, Friend, Spouse and Sovereign Good. He enters into a very special union with these souls—the exclusive privilege of the just, for sanctifying grace alone enables man thus to attain God by operation of his mind as his last end and the fountain of his beatitude.

[46] St. Bernard, sermon 74, in Cant. [47] John viii. 47.
[48] Wisdom xii. 1. [49] St. Augustine, *Confessions*, lib. I., c. v.

This union, however, is of different kinds. For the saints in heaven, this union with God is always *actual.* They never cease and never can cease to see and love God; hence they live in one continual and uninterrupted act of that Divine contemplation which constitutes their happiness. For children who have received the grace of baptism, but whose intelligence has not yet awakened, this union with God is undeveloped and is called *latent* or suspended. Again this union with God is suspended in all of us when we sleep, and when we are busied with the thousand occupations of the day which absorb our complete attention; it becomes *actual,* however, when we turn our mind and heart to God reflectively, endeavoring to know and to love Him, to walk in His presence and live in His intimacy.

Only in heaven shall we be able to effect a complete, perfect and inseparable union with God as our last end. Nevertheless we should strive even here below to tend towards this blissful state, to desire and to pray for it, developing all our energies to render it actual to the limits of possibility, and carefully avoiding whatever is opposed to it. The first of these obstacles is sin, which has the power either utterly to destroy this union by turning us into the enemies of God, or, if venial sin, to weaken it by decreasing Divine charity in our hearts. The second hindrance is attachment to creatures and to the goods and pleasures of this world; these are just so many chains which fetter the soul and prevent its flight towards the Sovereign Good. The third and last obstacle is mental dissipation, which turns our thoughts and affections away from the One in Whom they should all be centred.

And since beatitude is an active force—our intellectual act uniting through contemplation and love with the First Truth and the Sovereign Good Who alone can beatify us—it is evident that if we know where our true

interests lie, and if we desire to advance more and more in the paths of perfection and gain a foretaste of the eternal bliss, we must labor to strengthen the bands which unite us to God; devote much time to the study of the Divine perfections and favors; and, above all, to multiply our acts of charity, both exterior and interior, since "charity it is which unites us immediately with God, and binds us to Him in spiritual union." [50] Rising far above knowledge, charity enters in with all confidence whilst knowledge remains at the gate. Hence the maxim so often on the pen of spiritual writers, that the perfection of the Christian life consists in the love of God; and that our progress in holiness must be measured not by the advance we make in knowledge, but by the increase of charity in our hearts. This is what led St. Paul to say: "Above all, these things have charity, which is the bond of perfection." [51]

To love much, it is not necessary to know much, for if knowledge is the initiation of love, it is not its measure. St. Thomas remarks that "we often meet with very simple people whose hearts are overflowing with the love of God, and whose minds are not capable of understanding what Divine Wisdom is." We can therefore love God with all our heart and yet have very little knowledge of the Divine nature and its attributes; just as it is possible to have fathomed all the secrets of theology, and yet remain cold and indifferent about Divine things. On the other hand, when our knowledge is inspired and perfected by charity, it adds new fuel to the flames of our love.

Let us therefore imitate the example of the Spouse in the Canticle of Canticles, and strive, in a spirit of wisdom chastened by love, to become better and better acquainted with the beauty, the loveworthiness and the perfection of our Beloved One. Let us cling to Him

[50] St. Thomas. [51] Colossians iii. 14.

with all our might, crying out with the Psalmist: "It is good for me to cleave to my God." [52] Let us live in His love, let us live of His love, enjoying the nearness of His Divine presence and His intimacy; and let our conversation, like that of the Apostle, be in heaven.[53] In this way we shall fulfill the word of the beloved Apostle and the desire of all true friendship: "He that abideth in charity, abideth in God, and God in Him." [54]

Union with God, actual union, should be the object of our most ardent wishes, the aim of all our efforts, the goal towards which we should direct our entire spiritual life. This blessed union alone constitutes the perfection of the way to heaven, as it will one day constitute its perfection and beatitude.

[52] Psalm lxxii. 28. [53] Philippians iii. 20. [54] 1 John iv. 16.

PART THIRD

THIS DIVINE INDWELLING BY GRACE IS NOT PROPER TO THE PERSON OF THE HOLY SPIRIT ALONE, BUT IS THE COMMON PREROGATIVE OF THE WHOLE BLESSED TRINITY. IT IS THE PRIVILEGE OF ALL THE JUST, BOTH OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT

CHAPTER I

Although Usually Attributed to the Holy Ghost, the Divine Indwelling by Grace Is Not His Exclusive Prerogative, But Is Common to All Three Persons of the Trinity

So far we have spoken almost indiscriminately either of the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, or that of the whole Blessed Trinity in the souls of the just, thus conforming ourselves to the language of Scripture, which attributes this presence now to one, now to another of the Three Divine Persons. The Apostle had written to the faithful at Corinth: "Know you not that you are the temple of God, and the habitation of the Holy Spirit?" [1] And he also taught the Christians of Ephesus: "Christ dwelleth within you by faith;" [2] and Our Lord Himself said to His disciples: "If any man loveth Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and We will make our abode with him." [3]

[1] 1 Corinthians iii. 16. [2] Ephesians iii. 17. [3] John xiv. 23.

But we cannot doubt that this indwelling is more often attributed to the Holy Ghost alone. Only on one occasion does Scripture speak of the Father and Son as dwelling in the soul, whereas it often refers to the coming of and the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit as the Guest of our hearts. He is represented to us as the Gift of God by excellence; the essence of all gifts; the Source of the supernatural life; the Author of our sanctification; the Pledge of our eternal happiness. He it is Who infuses grace and charity into our hearts, makes of us children of God, and distributes to every one the Divine favors as He will. He enlightens our understanding, teaching us all truth; He softens our hearts and gently, yet firmly, persuades us to walk in the commandments of God. He comforts us in our afflictions; counsels us in our doubts; teaches us how to pray and what to ask for; nay, He Himself asks for us with unspeakable groanings. He awakens us from our lethargy and incites us to righteousness.[4]

The Fathers of the Church speak in exactly the same terms. The Holy Spirit is the great Gift of God and the Guest of our soul. In giving Himself to us, He makes us share in the Divine nature and constitutes us the children of God, saints, Divine beings. He is spoken of as the sanctifying Spirit, the principle of celestial and Divine life; some even go so far as to call Him the form of our holiness, the soul of our soul, the bond uniting us to the Father and the Son, as that One of the Divine persons by Whom the other two dwell in us.

If Scripture and the Fathers lay so much stress upon the fact that this indwelling by grace, like the work of our sanctification and adoption, are the particular work

[4] Acts viii. 20; John vii. 38, 39; 2 Corinthians i. 21, 22; Romans v. 5 and viii. 15; 1 Corinthians xii. 11; John xvi. 13; Ezechiel xxxvi. 27; Romans viii. 26 and viii. 14; Psalm cxlii. 12.

of the Holy Ghost, is this not a sure sign, and a strong proof that the Holy Spirit has special relations with our soul and a mode of union which, in some true sense, He does not share with the two other persons? For if His presence in us is absolutely the same, and in the same mode, as that of the Father and of the Son, why unceasingly represent Him in preference to the two other Persons as the Guest of our soul; and why attribute to Him a presence and operation which are shared in every possible manner by all Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity? Such considerations have given rise to the teaching of the indwelling which is proper and peculiar to the Holy Ghost.

The immense majority of theologians of every conceivable school are convinced that the terms appropriated and attributed, as applied to the Holy Spirit's indwelling, fully explain the texts of Scripture and those of the holy Fathers, which indicate that the special presence of God in the just is proper and peculiar to the Holy Spirit. None the less they have constantly maintained also that all Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity dwell in us through grace, and that our union with the Holy Spirit is not more real nor more immediate than that with the Father and the Son. However they concede, that although this presence is common to all Three Persons, it is attributed by *appropriation* specially to the Holy Ghost, by reason of His personal character of Divine Love, which is the bond of union between God and man.

I

We have seen that the terms *appropriation* and *attribution*, as applied to the Holy Spirit's indwelling, mean a perfection and an operation of the Third Person which, though common to the other two Divine Persons,

are yet none the less descriptive of the Divine Spirit's peculiar office in one or other works of our sanctification. An example of a special operation in the Blessed Trinity appropriated and attributed to one of the Divine Persons, is found in the first article of the Apostles' Creed: "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth." Here we attribute to the First Person of the Blessed Trinity omnipotence and creative power, although these belong equally to all Three Persons. It is also by appropriation that we attribute to the Holy Ghost the conception of Jesus Christ in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary, when we say: "I believe in Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, Our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost."

Why are all these attributions and appropriations found so frequently in Holy Writ, in the writings of the Fathers, the creeds, and the liturgies? St. Thomas' reply is: "For the manifestation of the faith." It is quite fitting, adds the Angelic Doctor, to appropriate such essential attributes now to one and again to another of the Divine Persons, for in this way we can the better instruct the faithful, and lead them by means of terms and expressions within the reach of their understanding to the knowledge of what the Apostle calls the mystery of God's intimate life, and the distinctive characteristics of the three persons.[5] The Trinity is indeed so sublime a truth that we can never hope to understand or explain it with the sole light of our reason. Even after it has been revealed to us by Almighty God, it remains hidden behind an impenetrable veil and wrapped up in obscurity, as long as we direct our steps away from the Lord. We can, however, focus the beams of a number of strong searchlights—as we may call them—on this mystery of our faith, by studying it through other truths we more fully understand. The result will be a more compre-

[5] St. Thomas I., q. xxxix., a. 7; 1 Corinthians ii. 10.

hensive and profitable knowledge of this wonderful mystery. To achieve this we can do no better than to seek out either the mirrorings of the Blessed Trinity found in the works of the Creator—and these may be either the Divine footsteps or images—or by showing the analogy which exists between the properties special to this or that Person and the essential attributes we appropriate to Him.[6]

Thus, in order to make known the Father we attribute to Him *power, eternity* and *unity,* because these perfections, although common to all Three Persons, bear a certain peculiar kinship with the special properties of the Father. Power is a principle and a source of action, hence it befits well the First Person of the Trinity, Who is Himself the principle, the origin, the source of the Divine being. It is becoming to Him, too, since the term power brings out well the difference between our heavenly Father and our fathers in this life. The latter grow more feeble as they advance in years, whereas our true Father remains forever and ever almighty. In the same way, eternity is rightly attributed to the First Person, because, like Him, it is without origin or beginning. Finally, unity is a term designating an entity entirely absolute and lacking in nothing; hence unity is fittingly attributed to the Divine Father, since He is what He is without generation or procession from either or both of the other Persons.

The titles, *wisdom, beauty* and *equality* are attributed to the Son; wisdom, because the Son coming forth from the Father by way of intelligence, is the term of the Father's knowledge, or, in other words, is wisdom divinely begotten; beauty, because in His begetting the Son is the perfect image of the Father, and the splendor of His substance; equality, finally, because as the Father's Word, the Son is consubstantial with the

[6] Vatican Council, Const. *Dei Filius.*

Father, being the infinitely adequate expression of His knowledge.

To the Holy Spirit we attribute *love, goodness* and *happiness;* love, because the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son through the relationship of infinite love, being the substantial term of their mutual affection; goodness, because goodness, being the cause and the object of love, presents a striking analogy with the character of the Third Person of the Trinity; happiness, because the Holy Ghost is the joy and happiness of both the Father and the Son, since by virtue of His procession from both He is the blissful fruit of their mutual and infinite love.

What we have said touching the inner attributes of God applies also to the Divine external works of the Blessed Trinity. Although the latter belong to all Three Persons of the Trinity—since the force which produces them is as common to all Three as the Divine nature itself—yet there are attributed at times to one Person, at times to another. This is done in order to make that Person better known by bringing out the likeness which exists between the operation in question and the distinctive character of the Person to Whom it is attributed. Thus we appropriate to the Father creation and all the works which bear the stamp of omnipotence, or prime mover, *primus motor.* To the Son we attribute the enlightenment of men's intellects and the other works of wisdom. To the Holy Ghost, the works of goodness and love, inspirations, good impulses, the life of grace, the sevenfold spiritual Gifts, the remission of sins, the sanctification of Souls, adoptive sonship, and the indwelling of God in our souls.

"The Church," says Leo XIII., "is accustomed most fittingly to attribute to the Father those works of the Divinity in which power excels, to the Son those in which wisdom excels, and those in which love excels

to the Holy Ghost. Not that all perfections and external operations are not common to the Three Divine Persons; for 'the operations of the Trinity are indivisible, even as the essence of the Trinity is indivisible (St. Augustine, *de Trin.*, I., i., ch. 4, 5); because as the Three Divine Persons are inseparable, so do they act inseparably.' But by a certain comparison, and a kind of affinity between the operations and the properties of the Persons, these operations are attributed or, as it is said, 'appropriated' to one Person rather than to the others." [7]

II

We are not justified, therefore, in claiming that a perfection, function, or operation is proper or to be appropriated to this or that Person of the Trinity merely because we find it frequently so attributed in Sacred Scripture or in the writings of the Fathers. It is the task of theologians to distinguish what is truly and absolutely proper and personal from what is merely appropriated (as a convenient form of speech) to each Person; and in making such distinctions they must rely on the teachings of faith and the principles of theology relating to the unity of the Divine essence and the distinction of persons. Now with very few exceptions the entire body of theologians teach, that the abiding presence of God in the souls of the just as the object of their knowledge and love, is not, *strictly speaking* and in every meaning, a property of the Holy Ghost, for it is a work common to all Three Persons; yet, for very good reasons, it is appropriated to this One of the Three. To be justified in calling this union the exclusive property of the Third Person of the Trinity, the Holy Ghost alone would have to be either the efficient cause of grace and charity, or at least the direct and immediate term

[7] Encyclical, *Divinum illud munus.*

of that experimental knowledge and that love in blissful joy possessed by the saints in a perfect manner in heaven, and by just souls in an imperfect way on earth.

Whether we consider it, therefore, in its efficient cause or in its effects (that is in the relation of intimate union, which as a perfect friendship, it establishes between God and the soul) sanctifying grace creates no ties between our souls and the Holy Ghost which are not bonds of the union of our soul to all Three Persons of the Trinity. Notwithstanding this, the abiding presence of God in the soul, being a work of love and a consequence or a fruit of love, it is quite naturally attributed to that Divine Person Who is subsistent and essential Love in the being of God; as is well explained in the Catechism of the Council of Trent: "Although the extrinsic works of the most Holy Trinity are common to the Three Persons, yet many of them are attributed specially to the Holy Ghost; giving us to understand that they originate from the boundless love of God towards us; for as the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Divine will, inflamed, as it were, with love, we can comprehend that those effects which are referred particularly to the Holy Ghost, are the result of the boundless love of God towards us." [8]

Nothing could, indeed, be more fitting than to attribute such effects of love as grace, charity and the abiding presence of God in our souls to Him Who is the mutual love of the Father and the Son. True, all these Persons of the Blessed Trinity are the efficient cause of the virtue of charity; true, too, that the exemplar according to which this virtue fashions us is primarily the essential love common to all Three Persons; or, in other words, that God is charity *par excellence*. And yet, if we examine the special characteristic traits of each one of the Divine Persons, no one will deny that there

[8] *Catech. Rom.*, p. I., a. viii., n. 8.

exists, to our perceptions, a more striking analogy between charity and the Holy Spirit than between charity and the Father or the Son.

What is charity, indeed, if not a strong and tender bond uniting us to God, an habitual inclination by which we are drawn to Him. Now this is what constitutes its likeness with that Divine Person, Who, by virtue of His procession from the two other Persons, is the love of the Father and the Son, and the bond of union between the two. We can now understand the Apostle when he exclaims: "The charity of God is spread abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, Who is given to us." [9]

This entire doctrine has been admirably crystallized by St. Thomas in a few remarkable sentences, which deserve to be cited here: "We must realize that the good things which come to us from God are due to His being their efficient cause and their exemplar cause; as to His being their efficient cause, it is by reason of His Divine power, and He is their exemplar cause by reason of their resembling, in a certain degree, the Divine perfections. Therefore, inasmuch as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost have but one and the same power, one the same essence, it follows that all that God does in us comes from the Three Persons as from one efficient cause. Nevertheless, the knowledge which God gives us by His gift of Wisdom is properly representative of the Son; and, in like manner, the love with which we love God is properly representative of the Holy Spirit. And thus the charity of God which is in us, although efficiently caused by the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, is, nevertheless, with a special reason said to be in us through the Holy Ghost." [10]

Such is the teaching of all the Scholastics, and such is the interpretation they have always placed upon the texts of Scripture cited by the advocates of an indwell-

[9] Romans v. 5. [10] St. Thomas, *Contra Gent.*, 1, IV., c. xxi.

ing proper to the Holy Ghost. All declare that the union of our soul with the Holy Ghost is not more real nor more immediate than our union with the Father and with the Son; and the Sovereign Pontiff, Pope Leo XIII., mingling his voice with that of the most authorized representatives of theological science, by adopting the common view of the Schools, has, as it were, canonized it. This is how he expresses himself in his Encyclical, *Divinum illud munus:* "Although this wonderful union, which is properly called indwelling, is most certainly produced by the presence of the whole Blessed Trinity (John xiv. 23), nevertheless, it is attributed in a peculiar manner to the Holy Ghost, *de Spirtu Sancto tamquam peculiaris prædicatur.*" This indwelling of the Third Person is, therefore, not in every sense proper or personal to the Holy Ghost, but is only appropriated to and predicated of Him.

After such a declaration, it would be very rash still to maintain that the indwelling of God in our souls, so frequently mentioned in Holy Writ, is in every meaning the property of the Third Person and not the common prerogative of all Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity.

CHAPTER II

The Indwelling of God in Men's Souls Is Not the Exclusive Privilege of the Just of the New Law, but is the Common Endowment of the Just of All Times

I

If we except St. Cyril of Alexandria, concerning whose true thought there might be question, the Fathers are unanimous in teaching, that if a difference does exist between the saints of the Old and the New Testament relative to the Divine indwelling by grace, it is only a difference in degree and in external manifestation.

Listen to the words of St. Leo the Great speaking of the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost: "All the patriarchs and prophets and priests, as well as all the just who had lived in preceding ages, had been nourished by the same sanctification of the Holy Spirit." [1]

And St. Athanasius says: "It is the very same Holy Spirit Who under the Law and under the Gospel sanctifies and consoles those who receive Him." [2]

Scripture is quite as explicit as the Fathers. Therein we read of holy men living under the Old Covenant, and yet filled with the Holy Ghost. Thus it is said of St. John the Baptist: "He shall be great before the Lord . . . and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb." [3] Elizabeth, too, was filled with the Holy Ghost the day of her cousin's visit.[4] Finally, the evangelist, St. Luke, narrates of the venerable man

[1] St. Leo M., *de Pentec.*, sermo 11, c. 3.
[2] St. Athanasius, Orat. 5, *contra Arian*, n. 25, 26.
[3] Luke 1. 15. [4] Luke 1. 41.

Simeon, that the "Holy Ghost was in him." [5] And yet all this took place long before the day of Pentecost.

Basing his argument, therefore, on the firm rock of the revealed word, the Sovereign Pontiff has declared that: "It is therefore true that in those of the just who lived before Christ, the Holy Ghost resided by grace, as we read in the Scriptures concerning the prophets, and Zachary, John the Baptist, Simeon, and Anna." [6] But if all this is true, then what interpretation are we to place on the words of St. John about the lack of certain manifestations of grace, "that the Spirit was not given because Jesus was not yet glorified?" [7] According to St. Augustine, St. Jerome and St. Athanasius, the words do not mean that "He had not really been given before that moment, but that He had not been given in the same manner. If in fact He had not been given at all, then with what Spirit had the prophets been filled when they prophesied? For Holy Writ says plainly and in many places, that it was by the Holy Ghost that they spoke." [8] St. Thomas explains the text in the same way.[9]

II

This is why, in his *ex professo* treatment of the question of Divine missions, St. Thomas inquiring whether the invisible mission of the Holy Ghost is shared by all those who are in the state of grace, consequently by the just of all times, answers without hesitation in the affirmative. Therefore, he concludes, even the patriarchs of the Old Testament received the invisible mission of the Holy Spirit.

The purpose of the invisible mission of the Holy Ghost is the sanctification of rational beings. This mis-

[5] Luke ii. 25. [6] Encyclical, *Divinum illud munus.*
[7] John vii. 39. [8] St. Augustine, *de Trin.*, lib. IV., c. xx., n. 29.
[9] St. Thomas in Rom., c. i., lect. 3; and *Summa Theologica*, I., q. xliii., a. 6, ad. 1.

sion takes place whenever sanctifying grace is bestowed upon or increased in a soul, *i. e.*, every time charity, or love—the inseparable consort of grace—transforms a person and makes him the friend of God, and, united with the gift of wisdom, renders him capable of attaining and possessing the Sovereign Good by knowledge and love. Now the just of the Old Law were, like ourselves, the friends of God. Scripture says explicitly: "Abraham believed God, and it was reputed to him unto righteousness, and he was called the friend of God." [10] Therefore, like ourselves, the friends of God in the older dispensation were capable of uniting with the Divinity by the operations of their intellect and will. Nothing was lacking, therefore, for them to become truly the temple and the abode of the Holy Spirit by His coming to them.

No one can express astonishment at this conclusion, if he reflect that the patriarchs were endowed with the same kind of holiness as the Christian of today. The grace by which they were justified made them children of God and heirs of eternal life, for the Council of Trent teaches, that "justification does not consist only in the remission of sins, but also in the renewal of the inner man by the reception of the grace and the Gifts of God, in such a manner that from being unjust he becomes just; so that he is made heir according to hope of life eternal. . . Whence in justification itself, together with the remission of his sins, he at the same time receives, through Jesus Christ, in Whom he is ingrafted, faith, hope and love." [11] They received, therefore, the forgiveness of their sins, sanctifying grace and the whole train of attendant virtues and supernatural Gifts of the Holy Ghost.

However, according to learned doctors, in the older dispensation, the invisible mission of the Holy Ghost

[10] James ii. 23. [11] *Triduum*, sess. VI., c. vii.

was not yet to be accompanied by a visible mission through the Incarnation because the latter would then have come out of due time, it being necessary that the visible mission of the Divine Son precede that of the Holy Ghost. It was quite fitting, that before the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity revealed His presence outwardly (thus giving to men a clearer knowledge of His Person), the plenitude of time resolved upon by the Wisdom of God for the Incarnation of the Word and His appearance amongst us, should have arrived.

Moreover, before revealing the dogma of the Trinity to a people so prone to idolatry as the Jews, it was necessary first to impress deeply upon their minds the fundamental truth of the unity of God. This truth, the direct antithesis of polytheism, is constantly recalled in the books of the Old Testament: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, is one." [12] On the other hand, we meet with only a few obscure allusions to the Trinity of Persons. Sometimes it is question indeed of the Word of God and His spirit, but they are spoken of in such vague terms, that it is very problematical whether the Jewish teachers had a notion that they were Three distinct Persons.

Under the New Law, on the contrary, after the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, the mystery of the Blessed Trinity was fully revealed and preached to the world, as a truth which all were to know and in which all were to profess belief. The faint light of the old covenant adjusted to the weakness of this childlike people, was eclipsed by the brilliant rays of the Christian revelation, and the moment was come for some external and clear manifestation of the Three Divine Persons, according to the very judicious remark of St. Gregory of Nazianzen.[13]

[12] Deuteronomy vi. 4. [13] St. Gregory, Naz., orat. xli., n. 11.

III

The necessary consequence of all this, and the conclusion of all who study Holy Scripture and the Fathers without bias for any particular school of thought, is that the soul of every person, no matter when he lived or what degree of holiness he acquired, whether he attained to the very heights of perfection or whether he was but entering upon the road of righteousness, whether an adult or an infant is united with God through grace, and entertains the Holy Spirit as his Guest. True, this union can be more or less perfect, it can admit of degrees which vary *ad infinitum*, but the mystical union is everywhere and always essentially the same.

To summarize: Before the appearance of the Word made flesh upon this earth, therefore, the Holy Ghost had already been sent and given to the souls of the just. This however was never accompanied by the Spirit's external and visible mission, so frequent in the first centuries of the Christian era, when the faithful needed to be strengthened in their belief in the mystery of the Blessed Trinity. Moreover, even though we do claim that the Holy Ghost was present in the just under the Old Law, not only by His operation but also by His substance, He was not present with that plenitude, that abundance, that profusion, so characteristic of the law of the Gospel.

This difference is sufficiently explained by the very nature of the two laws. The Mosaic law was essentially figurative and provisional; of itself, imperfect and inefficacious, and bringing no holiness to perfection. It prefigured and announced the grace that was to come, but by its ordinances it did not communicate it. It formulated Divine precepts, established certain wholesome prohibitions, and fully pointed out what was sin-

ful; but of itself it had no power to cleanse from sin. The sanctification it effected by its own means was purely external and carnal—"a cleansing of the flesh;" [14] a person was merely declared fit to take part in the Divine worship, but no internal change or renovation was produced by its external rites.

Under the Old Law there already existed, as we have seen, over and above outer and legal justice, a real inner justice which cleansed the sinner from his sins and made him acceptable in the eyes of God. However, this supernatural justice did not emanate from the Law itself, neither was it granted to the works of the Law, but to faith, and on account of the merits of the Saviour Who was to come. True holiness, *i. e.*, that which was to cleanse from sin and transform man into a Divine being, was to be the characteristic effect of the law of the Gospel, called for this reason the law of grace. This is why St. Thomas does not scruple to say that the just of the Old Law who possessed charity and the grace of the Holy Spirit, and who were not content with the earthly promises attached to the faithful observance of legal practices, but who fixed their thoughts upon and awaited principally the spiritual and eternal promises made them, already belonged in this respect to the New Law.[15]

However, notwithstanding the fact that the just of the Old Law possessed a justice and a holiness of the same nature as ours, and that they were as much the adopted sons of God by grace as ourselves, yet their condition of life was not every way that of sons, but rather it was that of servants. To cite the comparison used by St. Paul, they were like those children of noble parentage, who, although the heirs of their father's fortune and the lords of all, yet differ in nothing from servants, but are under tutors and governors until the

[14] Hebrews ix. 13. [15] *Summa Theologica*, Ia., IIæ., q. cvii., a. 1, ad. 2.

time appointed by their father. As they were not able to enter into the full possession of the heavenly inheritance, they were subjected to the thousand and one enslaving observances of the Law, which was their pedagogue in Christ.[16]

But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent His Son that He might redeem those who were under the Law, and that men might receive in a perfect manner the adoption of sons. And because we are sons, God hath sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying: Abba, Father. Thus was the fullness of the Divine mission reserved to the law of the Gospel.[17]

IV

Does it follow that the just who lived under the Old Covenant: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Moses and Josue, David and Jeremias, and countless others, whose faith, zeal, loyalty, meekness and other virtues are celebrated in such magnificent language by Holy Scripture, were inferior in personal holiness to the saints of the New Law and possessed neither grace nor the Holy Ghost in the same degree as the latter?

Generally speaking, this seems to have been the case, since the *means* of sanctification within the reach of the human race before the Incarnation of the Word were infinitely less powerful, than those actually at our disposal under the new dispensation. The sacrifices of the Old Law were only a shadow of the things that were to come. They were offered continually year after year; but they could never make those who observed them perfect, nor even, by their own efficacy, purify their conscience from sin. Jesus Christ, on the contrary, by one oblation, hath perfected forever them that are sanctified, if these will but coöperate. Unlike the sacra-

[16] Galatians iv. 1-3. [17] *Ibid.*, 6. 7.

ments of the New Law, which are efficacious causes of grace, the sacraments of the Mosaic law were merely signs and symbols. They did not produce grace, but only prefigured the grace which was to be given through the passion and death of Christ. This is why the Apostle calls them "weak and needy elements," [18] "weak," says St. Thomas, "because they were empty and did not contain grace." [19]

Another consideration of the Angelic Doctor, which was later on appropriated by the Council of Trent, will enable us to understand why the level of holiness is higher under the New Law than it was under the Law of Moses. "Those who are better prepared to receive grace," says St. Thomas, "receive it with greater abundance." Now, since the coming of Christ and because of His coming, mankind has been better disposed and more prepared than before to receive the Divine Gifts, either because the price of our ransom has been paid and the devil vanquished, or because we have come to a better knowledge of Divine things through the doctrine of Christ.

In another passage the Holy Doctor adds, that before the Incarnation grace was granted less abundantly than after the accomplishment of this mystery, since the merits and satisfactions of the Redeemer did not yet presently exist. As the invisible and interior mission of the Holy Ghost does not take place without a preceding bestowal or increase of grace, we can claim that this mission is effected, as a general rule, with a far larger fullness after the Incarnation than before.

But if in place of considering the *general* state of mankind, we reflect upon the *particular* conditions of certain ancient personages taken individually, there is nothing to prevent us from believing that they were so especially favored that they received the invisible mission

[18] Galatians iv. 9. [19] *Summa Theologica*, I., II., q. ciii., a. 2.

of the Holy Ghost with such fullness, that they attained to the real perfection of virtue. And if we parallel the personal grace of some of the saints of the Old Testament with that of *some* of those of the New, we must admit, with St. Thomas, that by their strong faith in the Mediator to come, many of the just who lived under the Old Law received the fullness of grace as abundantly as some who lived under the New Law, nay, that they received it in greater abundance than certain just Christians under the new dispensation.

There was a grace, however, for which even the holiest patriarchs were to sigh for many ages without being able to obtain it before the coming of the Messias—a certain interior mission of the Holy Ghost reserved to those who would live under the New Covenant: it was the grace of being admitted at death to a face-to-face vision of God; it was the final mission which is effected the moment the just soul enters into eternal glory. None of the saints of the Old Law entered heaven until Our Saviour's Ascension.

PART FOURTH

PURPOSE AND EFFECTS OF THE INVISIBLE AND INTERIOR MISSION OF THE HOLY GHOST; AND OF HIS INDWELLING IN MEN'S SOULS

CHAPTER I

Purpose of the Invisible Mission of the Holy Ghost and of His Entrance Into Souls: Sanctification of the Soul; Namely, the Forgiveness of Sin and Justification

The fact of the presence of God in our souls, at once substantial and special, having been established, and the mode of that presence—so frequently designated in Scripture as the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, and yet not exclusively proper to the Third Person, but only attributed to Him—having been explained, it remains for us to study more closely by the light of revelation, the purpose of this indwelling and the manifold effects which result—we might even say necessarily, flow—from the presence of this Divine Person in our souls.

If any subject should be of interest to us it is assuredly the present one; none touches us more closely, none is of such great value; none is more important. The study of this question is necessary at all times for Christians who are not content to remain in ignorance regarding the things of the supernatural life; it is indeed indispensable in our present day, when naturalism is so unrestrained, and when men seem to set value only on the goods of nature and of fortune. This will help to bring about a reaction against these fatal tendencies; it will lift the minds and hearts of men upward, and in-

spire them with lofty ideas of God's grace and a profound esteem for so great a gift. In entering upon this subject, we shall not be distressed with dry and tedious investigations. This study will plunge our souls into an abyss of gratitude, admiration, confidence and love towards God.

St. Paul earnestly desired that the early Christians might obtain this knowledge of spiritual things: "I cease not to give thanks for you, making commemoration of you in my prayers, that the God of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation, in the knowledge of Him." [1]

The difficult yet sweet task which now lies before us, is to present to the reader as complete a summary as possible of the Gifts which are infused into our hearts with the coming of the Holy Ghost, and to outline the secret operations of this Divine Guest, and the many favors of which He is the pledge and the first-fruits. This will serve as the crown of the work we have undertaken.

I

We have already established as an incontestable truth the consoling doctrine of the internal mission of the Holy Ghost, by which He is sent and given to souls together with sanctifying grace, establishing in them His temple, His throne, His abode, and His consolations. The question we are now to discuss is: Why this internal mission? Towards what does this giving of the Holy Spirit tend? What is the purpose, the end, the reason of this indwelling? If in the political world only great personages are chosen for diplomatic missions of the highest importance, and the missions intrusted to their charge are estimated by the importance

[1] Ephesians 1. 16-18.

of the persons chosen for them, how important indeed must be this mission intrusted to one of the Three Divine Persons?

The thought that God in His desire to save the human race, lost through the sin of Adam, should have vouchsafed to send His own Son into the world on the work of our redemption caused Our Saviour Himself to exclaim: "God hath so loved the world as to give His Only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him, shall not perish, but shall have life everlasting." [2] And yet, wonderful as this mission may be, it can be accounted for to a certain extent, if we reflect on the importance of the universal work that was to be achieved, the redemption of the human race. On the other hand, when it is question of a little child who is baptized, a sinner who repents, a just soul who grows in holiness—where now is the great work which calls for the mission of the Holy Ghost; where is the supreme interest which demands His presence; and not only a temporary presence, a passing mission, a short visit, but a permanent stay; for once the Holy Ghost enters a soul, He fixes His abode there until sin compels Him to leave: "The Father and I will come to him, and We will make our abode with him." [3]

Again, what brings the Holy Ghost into a soul, and why does He come? Can it be merely in order to receive in this holy and living temple our praise, adoration, prayers and thanksgiving? Or does He wish to encourage us by His presence to be valiant in our everyday struggles? Certainly not. The Holy Ghost comes to act, God being essentially active, or as theologians phrase it, Pure Act.

Far from being unfruitful, the presence of this sanctifying Spirit of our soul bears abundant fruit. The purpose of His mission, the great work He comes to per-

[2] John iii. 16. [3] John xiv. 23.

form, and which He will succeed in performing if we are docile to His inspirations and do not refuse Him our coöperation without which nothing can be done, is to wrest us from the empire of darkness and translate us into the kingdom of light; to create a new being within us and transform our entire soul by clothing it with justice and holiness; to infuse into us together with His grace, a life infinitely superior to the natural life; to render us partakers of the Divine nature; children of God and heirs of His kingdom; to strengthen our native powers by endowing us with new energies; to bestow upon us His Gifts; and to render us capable of performing acts that will be meritorious of eternal life. In a word, His mission consists in laboring efficaciously, incessantly and lovingly, in the work of our sanctification.

We must, however, enter into a more detailed study of this subject, and view separately each one of the wondrous effects this presence of the Holy Ghost brings in its train. This is the only effective way to become thoroughly acquainted with them all.

II

The first effect of the invisible mission of the Holy Ghost, the first-fruit of His entry into a soul wherein He had not yet dwelt, the first boon that He bestows, is a complete and generous forgiveness of sins. On account of the fall of our first parents, in every soul He enters for the first time—though this soul be that of a little child upon whose forehead the priest is pouring the sacred waters of baptism—He is confronted with sin, He meets with a child of wrath: "We were by nature children of wrath." [4]

To understand fully this first effect of grace, it would be necessary to have a perfect knowledge of what sin

[4] Ephesians ii. 3.

is, to see its heinousness, and to realize the terrible consequences it involves for the guilty one, in this life first of all, but especially in eternity. How can we ever hope to fathom this abyss with the light of our poor understanding? Sin is an offence against God; it is contempt of God, revolt against God. How describe a God Who has been outraged, scorned, exasperated? What are the consequences of His wrath, what the effects of His vengeance? True, we cannot speak of the passions of God in the ordinary meaning of that word; and when we say: the wrath of God, or the Divine vengeance, it is clear we mean to exclude all inordinate movements, emotions, and the like. And yet what true, sacred, and terrible realities lie hidden under these expressions, so frequently applied to God in Scripture!

God would not be infinite goodness were He not to declare Himself the implacable enemy of sin; neither would He be all justice and holiness, were He to allow an act, the malice of which is in some respects infinite because directed against infinite goodness, to remain unpunished. If God is great in the works of His mercy, He is not less great in the manifestations of His justice; and if He rewards bounteously any action performed for His glory, He visits terrible revenge upon outrages against His sacred Majesty. Whether He rewards virtue or whether He punishes crime, He always acts as God. What a perspective this single consideration opens up to the observant mind. The holy man, Job, was penetrated with such deep reverence for the justice of God that he exclaimed: "I have always feared God as waves swelling over me, and His weight I have not been able to bear." [5] And the great Apostle declared that: "It is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living God." [6] To fall into the hands of a powerful and cruel enemy is the worst fate we can imagine. Yet

[5] Job xxxi. 23. [6] Hebrews x. 31.

what can a mortal creature do in comparison with Him Who holds the world in His hand and Whose justice no sinner can escape? And so Our Lord warns His disciples: "Fear not them that kill the body, and after that have nothing more that they can do. But I will show you whom you shall fear; fear ye Him, Who, after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell." [7]

God does not always await the future life to visit His punishments on those who transgress His holy law and scorn His adorable majesty; the sinner is chastised even in this life; and though the punishment, at least as a rule, be merely interior and consequently invisible, it is none the less real and fearful. When a person commits mortal sin, the friendship between God and his soul is at once broken. God no longer considers him as His beloved child. He ceases to lavish His attentions and His love upon him, but regards him with an angry eye and henceforth treats him as His enemy; for "to God the wicked man and his wickedness are alike hateful." [8] As a first result of this hatred, God withdraws all the supernatural goods He had bestowed upon the soul: first, sanctifying grace, that pearl of the Gospel which Our Lord had gained for us at the price of His blood, for the preservation of which we ought to be ready to sacrifice everything; next, holy charity, which makes man the object of the Divine complacency and gives to his actions all their value. Further, God withdraws from the sinner the infused virtues and the Gifts of the Holy Ghost, which He had placed in his soul as so many Divine germs demanding but to blossom forth into the flowers and to mature into the fruits of sanctification; thus leaving him only faith and hope as a last plank of salvation, as a last earnest of His mercy.

Behold this unfortunate soul despoiled of all! The child of God has become the slave of Satan, the vessel

[7] Luke xii. 4, 5. [8] Wisdom xiv. 9

of honor has been changed into a vessel of ignominy, the heir of heaven can expect from Him Who has ceased to be his Father—but Who remains his Judge—only vengeance and punishment eternal.

Have you ever attended the degradation of a traitorous military officer? The culprit is led forth into the public square, and there in sight of his comrades he is stripped one by one of all the insignia of his rank. His decorations, if he have any, are the first to be torn off, because with his honor forfeited, he has lost the right to bear the seals of honor. Then his sword, once his pride and his pledge to defend his country, is broken before his very eyes, and the pieces are cast away, for it is a traitor's sword. His epaulettes, his entire uniform, disappear; and then thus stripped and covered with ignominy he faces the firing squad. Yet all this, after all, is but a shadowy image of the spiritual degradation inflicted on the sinner even in this life.

Externally, it is true, there is no evidence of the frightful transformation of the soul of a traitor to God. He comes and goes, attends to business, and seeing his health as vigorous as before, his fortune intact, his reputation safe, he may perhaps be tempted, in his blindness, to believe that sin is not such an enormity after all. He may go even further, and scorning the inner reproach of the Holy Ghost, dare to say: "I have sinned, and what harm hath befallen me?" [9]

What harm hath befallen him? How different his language would be, could he but witness the appalling ravages wreaked upon his soul by a single mortal sin. Once so beautiful before God and His angels, that soul at one suicidal stroke has lost all its loveliness. Only the frightfulness of a face deformed by leprosy remains. But a little while ago that soul was refulgent with the bright light of grace, redolent of the fragrance of virtue.

[9] Ecclesiasticus v. 4.

Now, ghastly shadows encircle it, and round about it hangs thick the stench of a rotting corpse. It is dead in the sight of God, as dead and as corrupted as a corpse in the grave. And yet it is not dead to the natural life—for it is immortal; but it is dead to a higher life, incomparably more precious, the life of grace.

With grace, the sinner has lost all: God's friendship, his eternal birthright, his preceding merits, nay, even the possibility of again acquiring them while he lacks Divine charity. All has perished, all has gone down in the wreck.

But what fills the sinner's cup of calamity to the brim is the loss of God. The soul, filled with grace, is the temple of the Holy Ghost, the mansion of the Three Divine Persons, who abide in it in a special manner; and even in this life of exile they become its joy and impart a foretaste of paradise. Scarcely has mortal sin been committed, however, when the Divine Guests depart, saying again and again those fearful words that rang out from the temple of Jerusalem when the day of its ruin had come: "Let us go hence! Let us go hence!" The soul thus abandoned by God and His angels becomes the den of demons and the haunt of those venomous creatures that are none other than its malignant passions.

Do you realize now the extent of the favor God grants to the sinner in forgiving him his sins? Were he left to his own resources, he could never hope to rise out of the awful condition in which his sins had plunged him, but God "Whose very nature it is to be merciful and to forgive"—according to the beautiful words of Mother Church—stretches forth His hand and lifts him from the abyss. Although He has been so bitterly offended, He takes the initiative and willingly makes the offer of reconciliation. He exhorts the sinner to repentance by inspiring him with a secret terror of everlasting doom,

enlightening his mind as to the consequences of his crimes, and enticing him by His grace. God lies in wait for the sinful soul, arousing his attention and drawing him, never ceasing to knock at the door of his heart. Then, as soon as the soul responds to the solicitations of His love, and casts itself at His feet, repeating with the prodigal: "Father, I have sinned, I am no longer worthy to be called Thy son," He mercifully stoops to it, clasps it in His arms, and restores to it His Holy Spirit, Who hastens again to take possession of His temple, bringing in His train, as a token of His happy return, grace and peace. All is now forgiven, the record of crime is effaced, all is forgotten. The old relations of love are again restored; and in His joy at having found the lost sheep, the Good Shepherd compensates Himself for the evil memories of the soul's past wickedness by lavishing upon it even more than His former tenderness.

III

Were the result of the coming, or of the return of the Holy Ghost into a soul merely the bestowal of the grace of pardon, this would be an inestimable boon; and yet our heavenly Guest is not content with forgetting the affronts and injuries of the sinner and remitting his debt to the Divine justice. He furthermore totally cleanses him from his sins, heals his wounds, and clothes him with the robe of innocence. He casts down the wall which sin had raised between the soul and its God, breaks his chains, delivers him from the powers of darkness, and translates him into the kingdom of light. The reconciliation between the soul and the Holy Spirit is made complete; all the treasures of merit that had been lost by sin are restored, and with them the personal love of the Holy Ghost and sanctifying grace. Pardon and justification are so closely knit, they are one and

the same thing, or, if you will, they are the twofold aspect or effect of one single boon, of one supernatural and abiding benefit bestowed upon the soul and known as sanctifying grace, which cleanses us from our sins and makes us holy—saints and friends of God.

Protestants have not understood things in this light. For them, grace is an extrinsic something, a mere external favor God grants to men. It communicates nothing real to the very soul itself, no positive element, no element of true and actual and intrinsic sanctification. It implies neither essential change nor renovation of the spirit; so that the justification of the sinner consists, according to Protestant doctrine, exclusively in the remission of the penalty due to his sins. Thus it is a kind of amnesty; for although no real change is effected in the individual or in his moral qualities, the punishment he has incurred is remitted, and he is authorized to take a place in the Christian society, and enjoy all his former rights with the full hope that he will not again he tormented by the remembrance of his crimes.

Such is, or originally was, the doctrine of Protestantism. In the minds of the pseudo-reformers, sins which are forgiven are not really blotted out but only covered over. Through faith, the repentant sinner appropriates to himself the justice of Jesus Christ, and covers himself over with it as with a rich mantle, so that his hideous wounds are concealed and screened off from the eyes of God. The Divine Majesty has been appeased by the voluntary oblation of the Son of God and has accepted the price of our ransom; He has resolved therefore not to avenge Himself for the crimes perpetrated against His Person, and the sinner is declared just and sent away absolved.

The Catholic view of justification is entirely different. Instead of regarding it as a mere condoning of punishment and a non-imputation of sin, the Church teaches

that the justification of the sinner includes the *real* remission, destruction and annihilation of his sins, and the *real* sanctification and the interior renovation of man through the willing reception of Divine grace and the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. This teaching was solemnly defined as an article of faith in the sixth session of the Council of Trent.

Indeed, it is hard to conceive how it could be otherwise. We can readily understand that a judge who does not see into the recesses of the human conscience, but has to rely on external evidence, will release a prisoner whose guilt cannot be established; because he must not run the risk of condemning an innocent person. We can understand, too, that a ruler, wishing to restore peace to his kingdom and do away with all trace of internal commotion, or obliged to deal with powerful enemies and wishing to avoid all cause for disturbance, will find it good policy to consent to pardon offenders who have been condemned and yet who do not repent of their crimes. But that God, Who, according to Holy Writ, "is the searcher of reins and of hearts;" [10] and "to Whose eyes all things are naked and open" [11]—that God, essentially the vindicator of order and right, should allow crime to go unpunished; that He should permit justice to be violated and disorder to prevail undisturbed; that He should consent to pardon the unrepentant sinner and shut His eyes to the constant perpetration of wicked deeds; that He should declare just, and regard as such, a person who in reality is defiled by sin—this is what reason and common sense, much less faith, will never concede. It is an hypothesis which every one of the Divine attributes contradicts; it is against the sovereignty, the holiness and the justice of God; for after sin there is a debt to be paid, an offence to be amended, and a grievance to be redressed. As

[10] Psalm vii. 10. [11] Hebrews iv. 13.

long as God remains God, He must require some reparation from the sinner; never can He send him away absolved and yet not reformed.

If conditions were otherwise, our justice would resemble that of the Scribes and Pharisees, whom Our Lord condemned in such vehement language: "Woe to you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites . . . who outwardly appear to men just, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and iniquity." [12]

Therefore, if the sinner wishes to obtain God's pardon, he can do so only through repentance; if he does not want his crimes to be imputed to him, it is indispensable that they be blotted out by the intimate infusion of sanctifying grace. This is the true notion of justification, such as the Church has always understood and taught it, a doctrine to be easily learned by an attentive study of Holy Scripture and the writings of the Fathers of the Church.

IV

It is not by a passing reference, nor in vague and mysterious terms, that Scripture speaks of this dogma. Holy Writ abounds in expressions, as clear as they are varied, enforcing this truth. We are told that sin is taken away, blotted out, washed away, purged—St. Paul, reminding the Corinthians of their former crimes having been washed away by the waters of baptism, tells them that once they were filthy with sin, "but now you are washed, but you are sanctified, but you are justified in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ and the Spirit of our God." [13] The Apostle insists that this cleansing is so complete that the sinner is made whiter than snow.

If instead of clinging to one or two texts in Scripture where it is said that our sins are covered over and not imputed to us, our separated brethren had studied the

[12] Matthew xxiii. 27, 28. [13] 1 Corinthians vi. 11.

aggregate of texts relating to this truth, they would have met with an overwhelming number attesting that sins once forgiven no longer exist, that they melt away as the ice in the summer's sun. They would have hearkened to the Psalmist: "As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our iniquities from us." [14] They would have learned from another prophet that God "casts all our sins into the bottom of the sea." [15] The Holy Ghost surely wishes us to understand by these words that sins once forgiven are forgotten and disappear forever. Finally they would have read in the book of Isaias the words which the Lord addressed to His people: "I am, I am He that blot out thy iniquities for My own sake, and I will not remember thy sins." [16] Now it would be an outrage against the majesty of God, as Bossuet remarks, to persist in believing that what God has removed from us, still remains; that what He has blotted out, destroyed, annihilated, is still in existence, and that the stains He has washed away have not disappeared. Taken in its obvious sense, the word "to wash" does not mean "to cover," but to "purify." Is its signification diminished because it is God Himself Who washes us, not with the blood of goats and of oxen, but with the blood of His own Divine Son? If in former days the blood of animals "could sanctify such as were defiled, how much more shall the blood of Christ cleanse our conscience from dead works; to serve the living God." [17] Let us conclude, therefore, that, for God to justify a person means not merely to declare him just and to regard him as such, but effectively to render him just; that for Him to pardon sins, means not only to take away the punishment, but also to abolish the guilt and remove the stain of them; and that to "cover" sins means to do away with them altogether.

[14] Psalm cii. 12.
[15] Micheas vii. 19.
[16] Isaias xliii. 25.
[17] Hebrews ix. 14.

St. Augustine remarks very aptly, that there are two ways of covering a wound. We can cover a wound either to heal it or to hide it. The surgeon covers a wound to protect it from injurious influences and the contact of the air; the patient covers a wound out of false modesty or for fear of a painful operation. The former covers the wound with a healing substance, the latter by covering it, prevents it from closing.[18]

We find in St. Thomas a theological reason in support of this doctrine of justification, a reason as beautiful as it is profound. The Angelic Doctor remarks first, that in justification God reinstates the sinner in His grace and friendship. This, of course, presupposes the granting of some Gift which will again render the person who is justified worthy of God's love. To be convinced of this, one has only to recall the principal difference which exists between the love of God and that of men, between the grace of God and the good favor of creatures. We love because of some beauty, good qualities or perfections that we see in the object we love. Later on, it is true, this love can be fostered by the transfer of gifts, but primarily it is based on some preëxisting good we see in others. The love of God, on the contrary, infuses and creates goodness in things, and according to the nature of this goodness we distinguish in God a twofold love. The first is a very general love reaching out to everything that exists and producing the very being of things; the second is a special love and of a higher order, for God raises the creature above its natural condition and invites it to a share in His own infinite happiness.

It is always the latter love that is referred to when we simply say that someone is loved by God, because then God wishes to communicate to this soul the Sovereign and Eternal Good which is no other than Him-

[18] St. Augustine, in Psalm xxxi., n. 12.

self. When, therefore, we speak of a person as being in the favor and friendship of God, this does not mean that God is favorably disposed towards him, or has conferred some outward gift upon him on account of some good quality he possesses. It signifies that God has communicated to him a supernatural Gift which has transformed him in a miraculous way, and has rendered him worthy of becoming the object of the Divine complacency.[19]

No pen can describe adequately, therefore, the wondrous change effected in a soul by sanctifying grace. Sin had brought in its train death, grace brings life. Sin had changed the soul into a criminal, a slave of Satan, a branch destined to be cut off and cast into the fire; grace confers righteousness and sanctity, as well as the title of child of God and the right to the inheritance of heaven. The soul was polluted, disfigured and plunged into darkness; with the return of grace its former beauty is restored, and it becomes pure and radiant with light. Happy would we be were we permitted to contemplate a soul in the state of grace. Such a vision is the delight of angels; it can even rejoice the heart of God, Who is Himself joy personified.

[19] St. Thomas, I., II., q. cx., a. 1.

CHAPTER II

Our Justification By Grace Is a Veritable Deification. How Sanctifying Grace Grants an Actual and Formal Participation in the Divine Nature

I

Another effect of the inner mission of the Holy Ghost and of His presence in us, is our deification by grace. "You shall be as gods," said the infernal serpent to tempt our first parents to eat the forbidden fruit; "in the day in which you shall eat of this fruit your eyes shall be opened and you shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." [1] And yielding to an insane pride, they tasted the fatal fruit; and their eyes were opened indeed, but only to behold in dismay the abyss into which their disobedience had plunged them. Instead of holding universal knowledge and realizing the Divine promises, they lost, for themselves and for all their posterity, the original justice in which they were constituted, as well as the magnificent prerogatives which it secured to them.

Since this awful downfall of the race's common father, man comes into the world a sinner. Before he has had the chance to commit even one personal sin, he is, by the fact of his descent from Adam, an enemy of God and a child of wrath, so that we inherit death from him who gives us our corporal life; for he can transmit to us only a dethroned and diminished nature, bereft of sanctifying grace, which is the soul's very life.

[1] Genesis iii. 5.

Add to this the other consequences of original sin—ignorance, concupiscence, suffering and death, and you will have an idea of the sad lot we fall heir to at our entry into this world.

But, O miracle of Divine Goodness! That deification, the promise of which was a snare on the lips of Satan, is offered us anew, this time by God Himself, not only as something to which we can rightly aspire, but as an end which it is our duty to achieve. It is to make possible for us this supreme exaltation, to merit for us this signal blessing, that the Son of God has deigned to humble Himself to us, and to clothe Himself with our humanity: "So that the Lord being clothed with our body and become man, it has come to pass that we, through the Word of God, have been deified." [2] "He is come down that we may ascend upward, and whilst remaining in His own nature He is made to partake of our nature, we meantime remaining in our nature are to be made partakers even of His nature; with this difference: that His participation in our nature does not lessen His Divine nature, but our participation in His nature marvelously betters our nature." [3]

If, however, dazzled by such grandeur, anyone cannot bear the thought that a lowly creature should be called by God to so high a destiny, we say to him with St. John Chrysostom that which we have already quoted from that Holy Father: "If you hesitate to believe that so great a boon should be bestowed on you, realize that the abasement of the Divine Word in the Incarnation is a marvel far greater than your elevation." [4]

Surprising as this doctrine of our supernatural elevation may seem, it is no less a truth of faith, set forth by the Prince of the Apostles, in such clear, formal and

[2] St. Athanasius, serm. IV., *contra Arianos*.
[3] St. Augustine, Epistle cxl., *ad Honoratum*.
[4] St. John Chrysostom, Homil. II. in Matthew, n. 2.

concise terms that they leave no room for doubt: "By Whom He hath given us most great and precious promises; that by these you may be made partakers of the Divine nature." [5] This participation in the nature and in the life of God is nothing else than sanctifying grace, so that the same gift at once justifies us and deifies us, and justification becomes a true deification.

This is what the great Bishop of Hippo declares without ambiguity. Commenting on the words of the Psalmist, "ye are Gods, and sons of the Most High," [6] he says: "He Who justifies is the very same Who deifies, because in justifying us He makes us children of God. . . . Now, if we are children of God, by that very fact we are gods, doubtless not by a natural generation, but by a grace of adoption. One only, indeed, is the Son of God by nature, the one only God with the Father, Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. . . . The others who become gods so become by His grace; they are not born of His substance so as to become what He is, but they attain to a Divine sonship by the favor of His generosity, in order that they may be made co-heirs of Christ." [7]

No one will be astonished at hearing the Holy Doctors declare that justification is the masterwork of Divine power. St. Thomas, always so careful in his criticisms, does not fear to affirm that it is even superior to the work of creation itself, if not in manner of action, at least in the effect it produces; for the creative act, although exclusively Divine by its nature, results in nothing more wonderful than the coming into existence of a being subject to change; while justification issues in that being's participation of the Divine nature, and makes of a sinful creature a Divine being, a son of God, an heir of eternal bliss.[8] In speaking thus, the Angelic

[5] 2 Peter i. 4. [6] Psalm lxxxi. 6.
[7] St. Augustine, in Psalm xlix., n. 2.
[8] St. Thomas, I., II., q. cxiii., a. 9.

Doctor but reproduces the thought voiced by St. Augustine eight centuries before: "To justify a sinner is a work greater than to create heaven and earth; for heaven and earth shall pass away, but the justification and salvation of the predestined soul shall abide." [9]

II

Let us try to penetrate more deeply into these wondrous secrets, and to fathom, in so far at least as is possible here below, the mystery of our deification by grace.

And first, how does this deification take place? By what marvelous process does a rational creature become inoculated with the life of God? It is brought about regularly by baptism, and constitutes a real generation resulting in a real birth.

This is that new generation of which the holy Epistles make such frequent mention; it is that second birth so much lauded by the Fathers, and ever kept before our minds by the sacred liturgy of our holy religion—a generation incomparably greater than our first and merely human generation, since it transmits to us, instead of a natural and human life, a life supernatural and Divine; it is a wonderful birth that transforms each one of us into that "new man" of which the Apostle speaks, "according to God, created in justice and holiness of truth" [10]—a generation wholly spiritual yet none the less real, the principle of which is neither flesh, nor blood, nor the will of man, but the gratuitous will of God;" [11] a mysterious birth which springs not from seed subject to corruption, but from seed incorruptible by the word of God;" [12] a generation and a birth as indispensable for living a life of grace as are carnal generation and birth for natural life. For it is Truth itself Who

[9] St. Augustine, in John, tract lxxii., n. 3.
[10] Ephesians iv. 24. [11] James i. 18. [12] 1 Peter i. 23.

has said: "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." [13] And the Council of Trent says: "Unless [men] are born again in Christ they can never be justified; it is only by that rebirth through the merit of His passion, that the grace of justification is bestowed upon them." [14]

But what at bottom is the nature of this Divine and regenerating element which baptism gives to our souls, and which makes us godlike? What constitutes this root principle of supernatural life which a sacrament confers on us and which other sacred ordinances are destined to preserve, to increase, and, should we be so unhappy as to lose it, to revive within us? And since this precious gift, the formative cause of our justification and of our deification, is nothing else but sanctifying grace, then what is this grace which sanctifies us?

Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ deigned one day to explain Himself on this matter for the benefit of a sinner whom He wished to convert. We refer to the Samaritan woman. Only, in place of a learned definition which would necessarily have remained uncomprehended, the good Master availed Himself of the simple circumstances of His meeting with this woman, who had come to fetch water from the well of Jacob, to speak to her of grace under the figure of a mystical water, possessed of divinely wonderful properties. He began by asking her for a drink of water, for, says the sacred text, He was tired from His journey and it was the time of day when the heat is most oppressive. Then, seeing the woman's surprise at the unusual request, for the Jews were not in the habit of speaking with the Samaritans, He added: "If thou hadst known the gift of God, and Who it is that says to thee, give Me to drink,

[13] John iii. 5, 6. [14] *Triduum*, session vi., c. 3.

thou perhaps wouldst have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water." [15]

Donum Dei, the gift of God. Here, indeed, we have the true notion of grace. It is a gift, consequently something gratuitous, something accorded us through no right or merit of our own. True, all that we have, all that we are—our body, soul, faculties, actions, and our external goods—everything comes to us from God and can be called a gift of His bounty, according to the words of the Apostle: "What hast thou that thou hast not received?" [16] But if each thing, each perfection, is, in a true sense, *a* gift of God, it is not *the* gift of God. God's paramount gift, that beside which those other gifts fade into nothingness, is grace. It is grace: the most precious, the most magnificent, the most necessary, the most gratuitous of all gifts.

But why does Jesus compare grace to water? Because grace does in the spiritual order all that water does in the material order. Water purifies, refreshes, quenches thirst, and renders sterility fruitful. It purifies what is soiled and restores its cleanliness, its lustre, its first beauty; it is a symbol of the interior purification wrought by grace, which not only removes the stains of mortal sin and gives back to the soul its pristine brightness, but adds to this beauty an incomparable charm, which delights the heart of God and draws from Him these words: "Thou art all fair, O my love, and there is no spot in thee." [17]

Water tempers the heat, and cools the atmosphere which a burning sun has made furnace-hot, soothes the tired limbs: symbolic of grace, which is a heavenly dew, subduing the fires of passion and lessening, little by little, and without permanently and completely quenching it here below, the fever of concupiscence.

Water assuages and allays thirst: an image of grace,

[15] John iv. 10. [16] 1 Corinthians iv. 7. [17] Canticles iv. 7.

which slakes the inextinguishable thirst of the human heart. Created for happiness, man tends towards it with an insatiable eagerness, and there is nothing he will not do to attain it. But too often, alas, he seeks happiness in the perishable goods of this world; in sensible pleasures, which only sharpen his thirst instead of appeasing it. This is what Our Lord wishes to make the Samaritan woman understand when, pointing to the water, a figure of the passing good things of earth, He said to her: "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but he that shall drink of the water that I will give, shall not thirst forever." [18]

But what is the meaning of the expression "living water," *aquam vivam,* which Our Saviour uses as a figure for grace? [19] Ordinarily, says St. Augustine, we apply the expression "living water," in opposition to the stagnant water of cisterns or marshes—to that which bubbles up from the earth, flows along and then sweeps seaward, always in communication with its source and preserving the evidence of life. If this water, although fresh from the spring, is caught in a reservoir, if its flow is interrupted, if it is cut off from its source, it can no longer bear the name of living water.[20] Now what is the source of grace if not the Holy Ghost? If then grace is called "living water," it is because it is not sundered from its principle, the Holy Ghost, Who by grace dwells in the heart of the truly sanctified man.[21]

A final property of water, and one which we cannot pass over in silence, is its power of imparting fruitfulness. When water is plentiful, the earth is clothed with rich vegetation, seeds germinate, flowers open as by enchantment, fruits ripen in abundance, harvest follows harvest in rich and varied succession. Where drought

[18] John iv. 13. [19] John iv. 10.
[20] St. Augustine, in John, tract xv., n. 12.
[21] St. Thomas, in John, vii., lect. 5.

holds sway, all is parched, drooping, dead; it is a desert of arid sands, a land of dreary monotony. The indispensable element of all physical life, water is an admirable figure of grace, by means of which our soul yields a bountiful harvest of virtues and of merits, but without which the soul, left to its own resources, is radically incapable of producing any fruit of salvation, remaining always barren and unproductive for heaven.

It is not that this same fallen nature is unable, by its own powers, to produce some good of the purely natural order; but these purely human actions, these virtues of a lower plane, like the streams in a dark chasm, have no power to lift themselves to the open day of heaven. Only Christian works and virtues, which spring from grace under the impulse of the Holy Spirit, can raise the soul to the heights of the heavenly Jerusalem. Coming down, as they do, from the eternal mountains, they ascend back again, by a strength, now become their own, to their starting point above. Here we see why Our Lord says of grace: "The water which I will give him, will become in him a fountain of living water, springing up into life eternal." [22]

St. Teresa tells us: "I love that part of the Gospel! From my earliest childhood, without understanding as I do now the precious worth of what I asked of God, I very often pleaded with the Divine Master to give me that wonderful water, and wheresoever I might be, I had with me a picture which represented that scene at the well, with these words written underneath: Lord, give me to drink of that water." [23]

To purify, to cool, to quench thirst—this is the property of what is called medicinal grace. "Grace which cures nature," as St. Thomas calls it. But the higher grace is, strictly speaking, sanctifying grace, which *elevates* our faculties and our actions above the needs

[22] John iv. 14. [23] *Autobiography of St. Teresa*, ch. xxx.

and the powers of nature, renders our works meritorious of eternal life, and becomes in us the principle of a higher and a Divine life—all this is the fruit of supernatural grace properly so-called—"elevating grace."

In the state of original justice, grace did not have to produce the first class of effects, those termed medicinal; for purification supposes stain, the need of cooling is indicative of excessive heat, and thirst, when it is acute, can cause the keenest suffering. And in the state of original innocence, there was neither stain, excess, nor pain. Grace had not yet to heal a nature that was in no way diseased, to restore an equilibrium that was not broken, to repair ruins which did not yet exist. Its function in that order of things was limited to that of prevention. But after the Fall, grace is as well a balm to heal our wounds and a salutary bath in which we should cleanse ourselves of stains, as it is a strong draught that gives to the soul the moral strength of which sin has deprived it. In the two states, the present one of weakness as also that of original innocence, sanctifying grace is the true formative principle of sanctity, the cause of our deification, the principle of supernatural and Divine life—in a word, it is that source of living water which springs up to eternity.[24]

III

To explain the nature of grace by its effects, is, if not the most profound, at least the most popular, let us say the only popular method of instruction, because it is the key to all minds. This is why Our Lord had recourse to this method on the occasion of which we have just been speaking. No one, however, will find it wrong for Christians of the scholarly class, and theologians, to seek to penetrate more deeply into the heart of this subject. To those who, not out of vain curiosity, but from

[24] John iv. 14.

the laudable desire to understand more thoroughly the blessings of God, ask us what in itself is sanctifying grace, we answer with the Scholastics, that it is a supernatural and abiding gift, dwelling in our soul, a participation in the Divine nature and life, which sanctifies man and makes him a child of God.

It is a supernatural gift; that is to say, so much above and beyond any knowledge or aspiration of nature, that it could not belong naturally to any created being, either as a constituent and integral part of its essence, or as a normal development of its faculties. Grace is, therefore, something essentially gratuitous, a Divine increment by which nature becomes strengthened and perfected in its own proper sphere, and at the same time ennobled and elevated to a higher and a Divine one.

Moreover, it is an abiding gift. Unlike actual grace, which is a passing help to virtue, an enlightening of the intellect, a prompting of the will, in brief a transient motion intended to make us produce an act superior to the powers of nature, grace proper, *i. e.*, sanctifying grace, is a stable and abiding gift which, received into the very essence of the soul, becomes in it, as it were, a second nature of a transcendent order, a principle of supernatural life, the firm root of meritorious acts, unless violently expelled by mortal sins. Indeed, it was not fitting, as the Angelic Doctor remarks, that we should be less well equipped in the order of grace than in the order of nature, and that in the latter there should exist a steadfast principle of operation, a supernatural force always ready for action; whereas in the case of actual graces we should be content to depend upon a transient help uplifting our faculties and determining this or that good action, and then passing out of existence once the action has been performed.

It remains then that grace, to quote the words of the Catechism of the Council of Trent, is "a Divine quality

inherent in the soul, and, as it were, a brilliant light that effaces all those evil stains which obscure the lustre of the soul, and invests it with increased brightness and beauty." [25] Hence the remark of St. Thomas: "That holiness which exists in God essentially and substantially is by grace given to our soul as a gift and a boon; we are thus to share in a goodness essentially Divine." This was but expressing in other words what the head of the Apostolic college had already said, when he affirmed that by grace we are made partakers of the Divine nature.[26]

In what does this participation consist? Is it a purely moral participation, as some would have it, consisting in mere uprightness of will inclining man to shun evil, keep the Commandments of God and lead a faithful and holy life?

If such were the case, our deification would exist only in name, and we would be the children of God in a purely metaphorical sense, somewhat after the manner of the children of Abraham, who are called by this name, though not of the Chosen People, but because they partake of and imitate the faith of this holy patriarch; or again, as the wicked are called the sons of Satan, because they are his worthy fellow-workers.

Wherefore other theologians—and they are by far the more numerous, and are the more commendable both for their science and their virtue—profess belief in a real and formative communication of the Divine nature to man. These theologians are led to embrace such a view by a twofold consideration. They remark first, that unlike a man who often exalts in most magnificent terms gifts that are of no value, God, on the contrary, neither overrates His gifts nor speaks of them in terms of exaggeration, but what He says in praise of them always remains far below the reality. Secondly, these

[25] *Catechism of the Romans*, part II., c. 11., n. 50. [26] 2 Peter 1. 4.

teachers call to mind the numerous testimonies in Holy Scripture, such as that in which the Holy Spirit declares, as by the lips of St. Peter, that grace is a very great and precious gift by which we are made partakers of the Divine nature; or by the mouth of St. John, that we are called and really are the sons of God, being born of God. And so these theologians conclude that this communication of God's nature is real, actual and specific. Not, of course, that it is in any way identical with the communication by which God the Father transmits His own substance to His Divine Son, but that it is a communication of the Divine virtue in an analogical sense, inasmuch as there exists a vital resemblance between the generation of the Son and the imparting of grace; this communication consisting in the granting of a created gift which is distinct from the Divine nature and yet the *living* image of it.

Such is also the teaching of the Fathers, for example, St. Cyril of Alexandria: "It is untrue to say that we cannot be one with God except by union of will. For above that union there is another union more sublime and far superior, which is wrought by the communication of the Divinity to man, who, whilst keeping his own nature, is, so to speak, transformed into God, just as iron plunged into fire becomes fiery, and whilst remaining iron seems changed into fire. . . . Union with God cannot exist otherwise than by participation with the Holy Spirit, diffusing in us the sanctification proper to Himself, imprinting and engraving on our souls the Divine likeness." [27]

This comparison of the incandescent piece of iron vested with all the properties of fire, and that of the crystal struck by the rays of the sun and thus suddenly transformed into a focus of light which dazzles our eyes, is to be found frequently in the writings of the Fathers,

[27] St. Cyril of Alexandria, in John 1. 9.

when they expound to the faithful the mystery of our supernatural deification by grace. Their purpose in all this is to give us to understand, that grace makes us really godlike, that it operates changes and transformations in the soul that are not less profound and marvelous than those in the material order which take place in bodies under the direct action of fire and light; but they do not wish us to infer that the mode of operation is identical in both cases. In the case of fire and the piece of iron, the former communicates to the latter part of its heat and light, whereas God communicates neither His substance nor His perfections to creatures by division of Himself any more in the supernatural order by grace and love than in the natural order by presence and power.

IV

Need we further inquire into the mode of this participation in the Divine nature? For a perfect understanding of it, we must first refer the reader to what we said in a preceding chapter about created beings and created perfections in reference to this same question. Every created being, we explained, is a participation in the Divine and uncreated being, and every created perfection a participation in the infinite perfection of God. They are not an emanation from God's being and which would thus by His creative act become partially external to Him, but a reproduction by similitude or an image of what exists in God. Since therefore grace is a real and actual entity, and not a mere name or external favor, as is claimed by Protestants—an error that was condemned by the Council of Trent—it follows that grace is like any other true perfection, viz., a real participation, or to put the thing clearer, a veritable yet finite imitation of an infinite perfection of God.

Let us say more. It is even a formal or specific par-

ticipation. To understand fully the meaning of this expression, we must recall the manner in which created perfections exist in God. Because there can be nothing good in an effect which is not found in its cause, and since God is the universal efficient cause of everything that exists, it is clear that the perfections of creatures must all preëxist in God. However, all these perfections are not found in God in the same manner.

There are certain excellencies or perfections which do not admit of any defects. Such are science, which is the exact knowledge of things through their causes; and justice, which is the rendering to each one according to his due, etc. There are others, on the contrary, like organic life, the reasoning faculty, which necessarily involve some imperfections. Thus it is a most excellent thing to possess within one's self the principle of one's own movements, and yet it is a serious inconvenience, and consequently imperfection, to have to depend upon matter in the exercise of one's mental activity. Again it is an inestimable privilege for rational beings to be able to attain truth, and yet it is a sign of imperfection to be able to do so only in a roundabout way and by means of the tiresome processes of deduction. Angels are beings of a higher nature than man, hence they do not have to reason out things but perceive in its very principle each and every conclusion that can be drawn therefrom. *A fortiori* does this apply to God.

This second category of perfections called by philosophers "mixed perfections," could never exist formally, *i. e.*, according to their specific nature, in God, but only in a supereminent degree. Thus reason does not exist in God as a discursive faculty, but only in the more perfect state of a pure intelligence.

Grace is supernatural to us, but natural and proper to Him Who is superior to any existing or possible creature. And when given to us, it is a participation in or

imitation of that primary and fundamental perfection which we regard as the root, the source, the principle of the Divine operations and attributes, *i. e.*, the very nature of God Himself.

This must be the case, as may be seen from the following. If it is necessary, says St. Thomas, relying on the authority of St. Dionysius, to be endowed with a spiritual nature in order to perform spiritual operations; and if, to speak in general terms, we cannot perform the operations of a nature without sharing in that nature, how are we to act in a Divine way unless we become partakers of the Divine nature? Now the purpose of grace is precisely to lift the soul to the height of a Divine being, Who will render it capable of performing functions that are proper to God; functions which consist in knowing God Himself, contemplating Him as He is, and loving Him with a beatific love.

If then God wills in His infinite goodness to fit us to perform such functions as may be termed connatural to His own, and if it is His desire that we shall see and love Him one day as He sees and loves Himself, that we shall possess and enjoy Him and find in this possession and enjoyment our supreme happiness, He must communicate to us a share in His Divine nature. Hence the words of St. Cyril: "If we have the same connatural activity with God, it is necessary that we have the same nature." [28]

Sanctifying grace therefore is a real and actual sharing in the very nature of God; it is His own intimate life gratuitously communicated to creatures; it is "the dawn of eternal life within our souls." [29] In uttering these words, St. Thomas was only echoing those other words of the great Apostle Paul: "The grace of God life everlasting." [30]

[28] St. Cyril of Alexandria, *Thesaur.*, I., II., c. 11.
[29] St. Thomas, II., II., q. xxiv., a. 3, ad. 2. [30] Romans vi. 23.

This seed may be small, this dawn sombre, it is none the less certain that sanctifying grace virtually contains in this life all the happiness of heaven, and communicates to us the substance of the goods we hope for; in a word, that it brings what in reality is heaven into our hearts. The state of glory alone will not differ substantially from the state of grace here below, it will only be its perfection, its consummation, its full development. "It will be," says Mgr. Gay, "the oak developing from the acorn, the harvest resulting from the seed, noonday succeeding to dawn." [31] The work of our deification has already begun, and with the Holy Spirit we possess the earnest of our future happiness.

If we only knew the gift of God! If we only realized the value of grace! With what ardent supplications would we not cry out with the Samaritan woman: "Lord, give me that water!" [32] And with what care we would avoid any action that might lead to the loss of grace, knowing that we "carry this treasure in earthen vessels," [33] and that one false step suffices to imperil it! How we would hasten to recover it, if we had had the misfortune to lose it; how we would endeavor to increase it in our souls. The words of the Angelic Doctor are simple, plain and full of meaning when he affirms that the smallest atom of grace is worth more than the whole universe.

V

And yet we have not said all that can be said regarding this question, for who is capable of this task? We have barely touched upon what the Apostle calls the "unsearchable riches of Christ." [34] For this grace, which shines forth as something worthy in itself of all our efforts, is but a means to an end; for when God

[31] *Sermons d'Avent.*
[32] John iv. 15.
[33] 2 Corinthians iv. 7.
[34] Ephesians iii. 8.

pours this miraculous gift into the Christian soul to cleanse and to justify it and to transform it into a new creature, a Divine being, the object of the Divine complacency, He is only fitting it for the reception of a far greater gift and for a more complete deification.

Grace is something sublime. something supereminent; it is not, however, the final term of the Divine love here below, nor the greatest effusion of the heart of God. It is a mere preparation for a higher good, a stepping-stone to the more excellent gift. It is a disposition preparatory to the communication of the Holy Ghost, Who comes at the same moment in Person into the just soul together with the Father and the Son, and Who unite with it in an ineffable way a- the object of its knowledge and love. The final purpose of grace is to place us in the actual possession of God, possession which is real, although obscure, here on earth, and which will end in a face-to-face contemplation in heaven. This is what constitutes the real value of grace.

The work of our deification comprises therefore a twofold element; one a created condition, which acts as a bond of union between God and the soul and disposes the soul for the reception of the Three Divine Persons; this is the function of grace. The other is an uncreated condition, which is, as it were, the crowning of our perfection, the term of our aspirations, the foretaste of the bliss of heaven; and this is God Himself, Who gives Himself to us, unites Himself with us, dwells in our hearts according to those words of Our Lord: "If anyone love Me . . . My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and We will make Our abode with him." [35]

This is why theologians distinguish a twofold participation in the Divine nature, the first being analogical, by which God communicates to man a share in His

[35] John xiv. 23.

Divine nature by means of a certain participation by way of resemblance, and which is introductory; the second which is the term and the goal of the former, and which consists in an intimate union of our very souls with God. St. Dionysius has condensed this teaching in a short formula which is full of meaning: "Our deification," he says, "consists in as perfect an assimilation and union with God as is possible." [36]

In Holy Scripture this union is compared to that of the husband and wife, and mystical writers speak of it as a spiritual espousal or marriage. This shows how intimate, sweet and fruitful it is.

It is indeed a close, intimate and profound union far greater than that which exists between man and woman, for nature at its best is but the shadow of grace. In marriage we have bodily union, here we have the compenetration of the soul by God. And if it is true to say of married persons that they are two in one flesh, the Apostle declares that "he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit." [37]

How sweet and chaste is this union. When placed side by side with it the marriage union seems cold and full of sorrows. The joys of the marriage state are fleeting, the pleasures in themselves of the lower grade; here everything is noble, lofty and lasting; glory, purity, love and other ineffable delights, which baffle all description and which fill the human heart to overflowing.

Finally this is a fruitful union, whence are born holy thoughts, generous affections, bold and daring enterprises, and that whole series of works of perfection known as Beatitudes and Fruits of the Holy Ghost.

This blessed union, begun on earth, will be consummated only in heaven. Although, as St. Paul remarks, the soul is already betrothed to Christ; she is al-

[36] St. Dionysius, *Hierarch Eccles.*, c. 1., n. 3.
[37] 1 Corinthians vi. 17.

ready the spouse of the Holy Ghost. The Third Person of the Trinity has already given to the soul its faith and troth, as it were, the wedding ring of the union. He has clothed her with the gold-embroidered robes of grace and charity; He has adorned her with the precious stones of His gifts and of the infused virtues; and He has given Himself to her, although in an obscure manner, as the pledge of the eternal bliss of heaven. Yet this Divine Spirit must complete His work in paradise by granting to the soul that rich dowry known as vision, as comprehension, and as fruition: vision, which is to take the place of faith; comprehension, which will enable the soul to grasp the Sovereign Good, the object of its constant desires here below, and fruition, which will perfect and consummate its happiness.

The work of supernatural transformation which is going on all throughout the Christian's life, will then come to an end, for our assimilation with God will be henceforth perfect. Already deified on earth in its essence by grace, it will in heaven be deified in its intelligence by the light of glory, and in its will by perfect charity; the soul in heaven will be admitted to a face-to-face contemplation of God, and will possess in the fullness of joy Him Who is Sovereign, subsistent Truth and Sovereign Good. At this moment God will appear before us in all the splendor of His glory: "We know, that when He shall appear, we shall be like unto Him: because we shall see Him as He is." [38] We shall live of His life, we shall share in His bliss, for God's life consists in self-knowledge and self-love, and His happiness in possessing Himself. Then will be realized the desire formulated by the Apostle in his Epistle to the Ephesians: "That we may be filled with all the fullness of God." [39]

[38] 1 John iii. 2. [39] Ephesians iii. 19.

CHAPTER III

Our Divine Adoptive Sonship. Resemblances and Differences Between Divine and Human Adoption. Incomparability and Dignity of the Christian

I

Through grace we are "made partakers of the Divine nature;" [1] through the same grace we are raised to the incomparable dignity of adopted sons of God, with a right to our Father's inheritance. This truth, which every Christian should have constantly before his eyes, and which he cannot too often make the object of his study, since it contains all our titles of nobility for this life and the pledge of our future bliss, is to be found on almost every page of the New Testament: "God sent His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, that He might redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of Sons. And because you are sons, God hath sent the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying: Abba, Father!" [2] And again: "For the Spirit Himself giveth testimony to our spirit that we are the sons of God." [3]

To convince us that it is question here not of a purely external or honorary title, but of a true and real sonship, which is a participation in the sonship of Jesus Christ, St. John does not hesitate in saying: "Behold what manner of charity the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called and should be the sons of God." [4] Then, carried away by admiration at the sight

[1] 2 Peter i. 4.
[2] Galatians iv. 4-6.
[3] Romans viii. 16.
[4] 1 John iii. 1.

of such grandeur, he exclaims: "Dearly beloved, we are now the sons of God, and it hath not yet appeared what we shall be. We know, that when He shall appear, we shall be like to Him; because we shall see Him as He is. And everyone that hath this hope in Him, sanctifieth himself, as He also is holy." [5]

The Fathers rival one another in their praises of this our glorious title of the sons of God; they exalt its many prerogatives, and proclaim with faith and love the precious advantages that are derived from it. Listen to the words of the great St. Augustine: "Consider the joy of a man a total stranger in this life, with not the least knowledge of his parents or family, sunk in misery and overwhelmed with unceasing toil, suddenly to learn that his father is now to meet him, a man of high estate and vast wealth. Such shall be the joy, only infinitely greater, of a Christian, when at the end of this miserable existence he is called to meet his eternal Father and be introduced into the glories of heaven." [6]

St. Leo the Great contends that no gift can compare with that by which we are made sons of God, "by which title God addresses each of us as My Son; and so must we address Him as My Father." [7] And we might cite many other Fathers of the Church to the same effect.

In order to illustrate more fully what we mean by Divine adoption, it will not be out of place here to compare it with human adoption, as it is regulated and practised by our laws. To adopt a child means to give him a place and standing in a family, to confer upon him gratuitously the title and prerogatives of son, which he did not possess by virtue of his birth; and especially to give him a right to the inheritance of his adopted father. Adoption, therefore, as it is practised by men, implies three things, viz., that the child to be adopted

[5] *Ibid.*, 2, 3. [6] St. Augustine, Enarr., in Psalm lxxxiv., n. 9.
[7] St. Leo, M., serms. vi., *de Nativ.*

is not already the son of but a stranger to the family which is adopting him; that the new relationship is entered upon entirely at the free choice of the person adopting; that the child becomes the legal heir to the inheritance of the adopting father.

It is easy to see that each and all of these conditions must be realized. First, it is perfectly evident that the one to be adopted has no claim of sonship. Otherwise how could we say that he was given a place gratuitously in a family to which he did not belong by birth. It is true that a son may forfeit his rights and afterwards recover them; he may be expelled from his father's house on account of misbehavior, and be legally cut off from all hereditary rights; yet even if this prodigal son has learned his lesson and repents and is allowed to resume his place in the family of his father, we cannot say of him that he is adopted. The ties of kindred are indestructible, and there will always be a profound difference between a son by nature, whatever be his misdoings, and him who is freely adopted into a family to which by nature he is a stranger.

Adoption is essentially voluntary and gratuitous: voluntary on the part of the person who adopts and on the part of him who is adopted; gratuitous, because it is founded neither on a natural nor on an acquired right. It is a contract entered upon by two naturally independent persons who agree the first, to make over his name and his fortune; the second, his own personality. The parent confers upon his beneficiary all the rights of a legitimate son, and the latter agrees to respect the authority of the father in whose inheritance he is made to share.

II

If, therefore, our adoption by grace is not an empty word, we must find fulfilled in it all the conditions

which by reason of the very nature of the case enter necessarily into any true adoption.

First, it is strangers whom God adopts when He communicates to natural beings sanctifying grace, and so gives them a share in His own nature and life. It is true, that if we consider even natural man endowed with the natural gifts alone, he is not in every way estranged from God, since he is indebted to Him for everything he possesses. He is, however, estranged supernaturally, by the absence of grace and of glory, and it is precisely in this sense that we say he is adopted.[8] Natural man, therefore, *i. e.*, man lacking grace, cannot be regarded as belonging to the number of those of whom it has been said: "You are God's, and sons of the Most High."[9] He is not a member of the Divine family, he holds no title to the possession of those goods which belong essentially to God; he is a stranger to God in a true sense of the term. There exist no other relations between him and his Creator than those which exist between an effect and its cause, a piece of work and the workman who produces it. The relation of the father to the son does not exist, since he is created not generated, made out of nothing and not brought forth from the very bosom of the eternal Father. And if, like all effects, he bears a certain resemblance with his cause, he does not share in the *nature* of his cause; though he was made to the image and likeness of God, he does not live the Divine life, for he has nothing truly Divine in him neither by essence nor by participation.

Yet it must be said that God can be called our Father in a very broad sense even in the natural order, just as any artisan is said to be the father of the work of his hand. In the same sense we may call all creatures, but especially rational creatures, which bear a more striking resemblance with the Divinity, sons of God. Strictly

[8] St. Thomas, III., q. xxiii., a. 1, ad 1. [9] Psalm lxxxi. 6.

speaking, however, they are not sons of God, on account of that absence of similitude of nature which must exist between the father and his children.

Catholic tradition, therefore, has always regarded Divine adoption as an invitation extended by God to beings by nature placed apart from Him, and who in consequence of their native condition are His servants and not His children. This is the explanation of St. Cyril of Alexandria: "We, who by nature are only creatures of God's making and of servile condition, obtain by grace and not on account of any natural requirement, the dignity of children of God." [10] St. Athanasius expresses the same thought.[11]

The Sovereign Pontiff, Leo XIII., therefore, simply echoed the traditional teaching of the Church when he wrote in his beautiful Encyclical on the Holy Ghost: "Human nature is by necessity the servant of God: 'The creature is a servant; we are the servants of God by nature' (St. Cyril of Alexandria, *Thesaur.*, lib. v., c. 5). On account, however, of original sin, our whole nature had fallen into such guilt and dishonor, that we had become enemies of God. 'We were by nature the children of wrath' (Ephesians ii. 3). There was no power which could raise us and deliver us from this ruin and eternal destruction. But God, the Creator of mankind and infinitely merciful, did this through His Only-begotten Son, by Whose favor it was brought about that man was restored to that rank and dignity whence he had fallen, and was adorned with still more abundant graces. No one can express the greatness of this work of Divine grace in the souls of men. Wherefore, both in Holy Scripture and in the writings of the Fathers, men are styled regenerated, new creatures, partakers of the Divine Nature, children of God, god-like, and similar epithets are employed." [12]

[10] St. Cyril of Alexandria, in John, lib. i.
[11] St. Athanasius, Orat. 2, *contra Arianos*. [12] *Divinum illud munus.*

The very moment grace enters our soul, a wondrous change is wrought in us. We were the servants of God by creation and suddenly we become His children; we were sons of the first Adam, heirs of his nature and of his sin, and we are made brothers of the second Adam, Jesus Christ Our Saviour, Who is not ashamed to call us His brothers. Then do we hear the Apostle address us these words: "Now therefore you are no more strangers and foreigners; but you are fellow-citizens with the saints, and the domestics of God." [13]

Meantime God is not content with removing the blemish of our first origin; He communicates to us a new being, a new life, a new nature. He engenders us in a spiritual sense, not indeed as He engenders His Only-begotten Son, but in a certain sense in an analogous way. The Son is consubstantial with the Father, Who communicates to Him His own nature in all its fullness. We have only a finite share in and an analogous imitation of this same nature. The Son is God, we are merely deified; His generation is necessary and eternal, ours is gratuitous and free and wrought in time: "For by His own will hath He begotten us by the word of truth." [14] In short, the Word is the Son of God by nature; we are the sons of God by bounty and adoption, having been deified by grace without being born of the Divine substance: "Man hath He called gods, deified by grace, born not of His substance." [15] Although we are only the adopted sons of God, nevertheless we have a right to the inheritance of our heavenly Father: "But if sons, heirs; heirs indeed of God and co-heirs of Christ." [16]

This right to the inheritance of our Father constitutes what is most essential in the idea of adoption. It is the purpose and end of adoption just as love is the principle.

[13] Ephesians ii. 19.
[14] James i. 18.
[15] St. Augustine in Psalm xlix., n. 2.
[16] Romans viii. 17.

By the very fact that God in His infinite goodness invites mankind to a share in His own happiness, He may be said to adopt them.[17] Great and sublime vocation! priceless boon! which caused St. Paul to cry out in transports of love and gratitude: "Blessed be the God and Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Who hath blessed us with spiritual blessings in heavenly places, in Christ. As He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and unspotted in His sight, in charity. Who hath predestinated us unto the adoption of children through Jesus Christ unto Himself: according to the purpose of His will: unto the praise of the glory of His grace, in which He hath graced us in His beloved Son." [18]

III

Grace then fulfills all the conditions of true adoption, since by it strangers to God are made the children of God and the heirs of His inheritance. Divine adoption, however, differs considerably from human adoption; and if there exist certain resemblances between the two, nevertheless the differences are great and very pronounced.

Persons of this world usually adopt children because they have no children of their own. A married couple who have not been blessed with a child, may fear to see the family name die out. Immediately they will fix their choice upon one who is a stranger to their blood, and they will introduce him into their home and treat him as their own son, giving him their own name and constituting him their legal heir; and by this means they will be comforted by the thought that they will not, so to speak, die completely. If, however, they have been blessed with a child of their own, they will not think of introducing other heirs into the home and thus

[17] St. Thomas, III., q. xxiii., a. 1. [18] Ephesians i. 3-6.

diminish his patrimony. "This is the way men act," says St. Augustine, "but God acts otherwise."

For God does not adopt us because He has no son of His own: He adopts us out of a pure motive of love, and in order to pour forth on others the abundance of His perfections. He has a Son Who is equal to Himself, perfect, immortal, and "Whom He hath appointed heir of all things;" [19] nevertheless in His infinite goodness He wishes to increase the members of the Divine family, and so He condescends to invite creatures to a share in goods to which they had no right, and to confer upon them a Divine sonship akin to that of the Word; just as by creation He had communicated to all creatures a likeness of His perfection, according to the words of the Apostle: "Whom He foreknew, them He predestinated to be made conformable to His Son." [20]

Before adopting us, however, it was indispensable that God should make us share in His nature by generating us spiritually. Conformity of nature must exist between the person who adopts and him who is adopted, so much so that no man would dream of adopting any other being than a human being. Adoption as practised among men presupposes this community of nature as already existing; Divine adoption, on the other hand, must create it; for divinity belongs to God alone. Man may choose among his fellow creatures him whom he wishes to adopt; God can adopt a human being only on condition that He first of all deify him by giving him a share in His nature.

Furthermore, in human adoption, a stranger has within him the capability to inherit. If he has no such claim by right of his birth, he can obtain it through a mere judicial decision, which will place him in possession of the goods bequeathed to him. In Divine adoption it is otherwise. Not only must God mark out the

[19] Hebrews 1. 2. [20] Romans viii. 29.

person whom He wishes to constitute heir to the inheritance of heaven, but He must create in the one whom He chooses the capacity that will enable him to take possession of the Divine goods. No created being left to its own resources is capable of attaining to such heights; it must be lifted to it by Divine grace and glory.

Doubtless by the fact that man was created to the image and likeness of God, and that he is endowed with an intelligent nature, he has the innate capability of being raised to the beatific vision and to a share in the Divine happiness, which consists in the fruition of God. However, if he wishes to obtain the actual possession of this supreme happiness, he must be assisted by supernatural forces, the function of which is to perfect his intelligence and enlarge his heart.

Human adoption is a purely external act, a legal fiction which has the power of modifying the social standard of an individual, of inspiring him with new feelings, and of establishing between him and his adopting parent relations of intimacy and affection, but which cannot transform his inner nature. A father surrenders indeed everything he is capable of surrendering, when he transmits to his adopted child his name, fortune and affection. The new bearer of the family name, however, remains in his nature an alien to the race into which he is adopted. If he has a noble and grateful heart, he will espouse all the feelings, thoughts and traditions of his adopted family, and will pledge to its members his obedience and love; but this sonship will have something artificial and conventional about it, and there will always be lacking the bond of origin and the voice of blood. Such is not the case in the Divine adoption. The day in which we are initiated into the Christian religion, we are not only given the name of Christians, we are not only incorporated into the family of Jesus Christ and bound over to His teaching, but we

receive upon and within our souls a mark of resemblance, an indelible character, "the spirit of adoption of sons, whereby we cry: Abba, Father." [21] Finally, through the sacramental action of baptism and the other Divine symbols, and, better still, through the precious banquet of the Holy Eucharist, we imbibe the very blood of Him in Whom we are adopted. In this way we are authentically and really made the members of His race: "For we are also His offspring." [22] And because we are of the race of God, and because our sonship is not purely nominal, but absolutely true and real, we become heirs in the strictest sense of the term, of the Father we have in common with Jesus Christ, and consequently joint heirs with the first-born of our race.[23]

IV

How can the most pretentious titles which men in their vanity love and boast of, compare with the title of children of God and brothers of Christ! What is a prince of this world, a president, a king, however powerful he may be, when compared with an heir of the kingdom of heaven? St. Louis, King of France, realized this, and preferred to be called simply Louis of Poissy —the village in which he had received the sacrament of regeneration—rather than to be saluted with the title of King of France.

Let others, if they will, boast of their noble origin, of the extent and profoundness of their learning, of their immense fortune, or their glorious civic titles; in the eyes of Faith, and consequently before God, all these things are as naught compared with the dignity of a Christian who is in the state of grace. This just soul may be that of a rough workman who toils the live long day to earn his living; it may be that of a poor

[21] Romans viii. 15. [22] Acts xvii. 28, 29. [23] Romans viii. 17.

woman whom everyone totally ignores; or again, that of a beggar who has only a few wretched rags wherewith to cover his naked frame, and who is spurned and despised by men. Yet while the rich of this world pass him by, and cast not a glance upon his misery, all the inhabitants of heaven have their gaze fixed upon him, and the Almighty embraces him in His loving regard, speaking again the words He had pronounced so solemnly in praise of His Son Jesus Christ: "This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased." [24] The angels gather around him in religious reverence, and cover him with their protection, for they see in him a brother of their own, and a joint-heir with them of the glory of heaven.

This is what we should strive to impress upon the mind of this present generation, who are so cold and indifferent with regard to the things of salvation, so ungrateful towards their Creator, and so scornful of His graces. Many Christians there are who set little value on their Divine title, many who are ashamed to own to it before the children of this world. These we must remind of the splendor of their spiritual birth, the dignity of their baptism, the incomparable greatness of their destiny; these we are to instruct not to be ashamed of that in which they should glory. Does a young man belonging to a distinguished family blush at the mention of the name of his ancestors? We who have been baptized—we belong to the noblest of races; our race is the race of God Himself; we are His children, and in this wonderful dignity alone must we glory.

"Learn," wrote St. Jerome to the virgin Eustochium, "to cherish a holy pride, disdaining the company of those women who are puffed up with the wealth and state of their families, for as a Christian thou belongest to a higher condition of life than they." [25] Christian

[24] Matthew xvii. 5. [25] St. Jerome, Epistle ix.

humility is becoming to us as creatures and especially as sinners, but we cannot have too high an idea of things pertaining to the supernatural life. On the contrary, we can be justly proud of possessing such Divine endowments; this is one way of showing how highly we value them. Let persons who do not profess our faith set their hearts on goods and advantages of the natural order, let them speak in extravagant praise of the advancements of science, and such like things. We can understand their attitude since, according to St. Paul: "The sensual man perceiveth not those things which are of the Spirit of God." [26] The Christian, however, although he values and cultivates the natural sciences as much as anyone—for grace does not destroy but perfects nature—professes belief in a higher and more essential science, the science of salvation.

Listen to the noble words of St. Cyprian in answer to those whose lips in his day were constantly vaunting the words progress, civilization, new discoveries; the same class who in our own times are not satisfied with kneeling in ecstasy before what they term masterpieces of thought and conquests of science, but who would impose their admiration of them upon others: "He who realizes that he is a son of God will never admire the works of men. Whosoever is a son of God feels that he abdicates his dignity when he admires anything after knowing his relation to God." [27] The same holy Bishop can find no more powerful incentive in urging his flock to repel the temptations of the evil one, than to suggest to them the thought of their Divine sonship: "When the flesh would lure thee to shameful pleasures, make this answer: I am a child of God; I am called to too high a destiny to make myself the slave of vile passions. When the world solicits thee, answer thus: I am a child of God; heaven's riches are laid up for me; it is

[26] 1 Corinthians ii. 14. [27] St. Cyprian, *lib. de Spectac.*, n. ix.

beneath my honor to set value on a clod of this earth. When the demon would offer thee the high places of this world, answer him: Begone, Satan; cease to defile with thy suggestions a child of God." [28] And St. Leo the Great exhorts us in like manner: "O Christian soul, appreciate thy dignity, and realize that thou hast been made so close an associate of the Divine nature; and never again sink back into thy former vile behavior." [29]

[28] St. Cyprian, *lib. de Spectac.*, n. ix.
[29] St. Leo, M., Serm. *de Nativitate Dom'i.*

CHAPTER IV

Our Right to the Divine Inheritance a Consequence of Our Adoption. What Is This Inheritance?

I

By grace we are constituted not only the children of God, but also the heirs of His eternal kingdom: "If sons, also heirs." This is the Apostle's conclusion; and it is the necessary consequence of our adoption, for if the adopted son is not placed in possession of a true right to the inheritance of the person who adopts him, adoption has no meaning. As a rule it is only when there is no legitimate son, that upon the death of the testator, a stranger is called upon to accept an inheritance as the adopted son. Now God cannot die, and furthermore He possesses an only Son, "Whom He hath appointed heir of all things," [1] to Whom He hath delivered all things, and to Whom all things belong in heaven and on earth. And yet, remarks St. Augustine: "So great is the love of that Divine heir, that He has willed to have co-heirs. What avaricious man would do that?—to join other heirs with himself. If there should happen to be such a one, he would only divide the heritage and retain for himself at least half of it. But the heritage which we have jointly with Christ is not made less to us than it is to Him, it is not lessened by however great a number of co-heirs there may be associated with Him. It is as great among many as among few, as much to every single one as to all." [2]

We cannot speak of spiritual goods as we do of natural goods. The latter cannot integrally belong to sev-

[1] Hebrews i. 2. [2] St. Augustine, in Psalm xlix., n. 2.

eral possessors at the same time, and therefore their actual possessor cannot invite another to share with him his patrimony without divesting himself of some part or of all that he possesses. Spiritual goods, on the contrary, can be possessed simultaneously by a number of persons with no division whatsoever. Would it be correct to say that the teacher divests himself of all the knowledge he has acquired, when he imparts it to the group of students who gather about him? In the same manner Christ can invite us to receive with Him the inheritance of our common Father, without fear of impoverishing Himself and without causing any detriment to Himself or to His heavenly Father.

And what is meant by an inheritance? All will agree that the inheritance of a person is that which constitutes his fortune; it is his wealth. To fully deserve the title of heir, therefore, it is not enough to receive any kind of legacy or even an important present; it is the major part, if not the totality, of the testator's possessions, *i. e.*, what substantially constitutes his fortune. Now God's wealth consists not, like that of man, in external goods —gold, silver, products of the earth, fields, edifices, etc.; all these things evidently belong to Him, for nothing in the universe can escape His sovereign dominion: "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof." [3] "His is the sea, for He hath made it." [4] Yet all these material goods, so ardently coveted by the creature, because it sees in them the means to provide for its needs and satisfy its pleasure, cannot be looked upon as the wealth of the Creator. This is why He abandons them without distinction to the good and to the bad, nay, oftentimes sinners seem to be more favored than others. God's goods properly so-called are, on the contrary, the exclusive privilege of His children by adoption, so that the words of Scripture find good their application here:

[3] Psalm xxiii. 1. [4] Psalm xciv. 5.

"Cast out the bondwoman, and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman." [5] The goods of God, His wealth, is Himself, His own Divine perfection; since He is the infinite God, the principle and exemplar of all good, He is fully sufficient unto Himself, and finds in the possession and enjoyment of Himself perfect happiness.

God, however, in His infinite goodness, did not wish to be alone in the enjoyment of His happiness. With no other purpose in view, therefore, than to make others happy, He was pleased to offer rational beings a share in these Divine goods which far surpass anything the intelligence of men or even of angels is capable of conceiving; for: "Eye hath not seen, nor hath ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, what God hath prepared for those who love Him." [6] In calling us to the supernatural order, He confers upon us the means to reach this supreme happiness of possessing Himself; in adopting us through grace, He gives us that favor as a real right.

Thus the vision of God's infinite beauty, the love and enjoyment of the Supreme Good, the participation in God's own happiness—these are what constitute the precious heritage, the incomparable patrimony of His adopted children. How can we not sing with the Psalmist: "The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and of my cup. . . The lines are fallen unto me in goodly places, for my inheritance is goodly to me." [7]

II

St. Paul was right, then, in speaking of "the riches of the glory of his heritage among the saints." [8] Who could conceive of the extent of these riches, since it is the good things of the Lord we are going to enjoy? "I

[5] Galatians iv. 30.
[6] 1 Corinthians ii. 19.
[7] Psalm xv. 5, 6.
[8] Ephesians i. 18.

believe that I shall see the good things of the Lord in the land of the living." [9]

We are told in Holy Writ that Moses, to whom the Lord was wont to speak as to His friend, one day in an outburst of confidence, gave utterance to the following prayer: "If I have found favor in Thy sight, show me Thy face that I may know Thee . . . show me Thy glory." And the Lord, answering his prayer in part, said to him: "I will show thee all good. . . Thou canst not see My face; for no man shall see Me and live. . . Behold there is a place with Me, and thou shalt stand upon the rock, and when My glory shall pass, I will set thee in a hole of the rock, and protect thee with My right hand till I pass. And I will take away My hand, and thou shalt see My hinder parts; but My face thou canst not see." [10]

Now this God, Whom Moses desired so ardently to contemplate, Who is naturally invisible, and "Who dwelleth in light inaccessible, Whom no man seeth nor can see," [11] will one day show Himself as He is; for it is in His knowledge and vision that eternal life consists: "This is eternal life: that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ Whom Thou hast sent." [12]

The elect will one day see the eternal King of ages in all the splendor of His glory and majesty; [13] they will behold Him no longer in the mirror of created things, through a veil or in the obscurity of faith; they will see no longer only "His hinder parts," like Moses, but face to face, directly, immediately, and as He is, as He sees and knows Himself.[14] For all eternity they will contemplate with an eager, yet always satiated, gaze His infinity, His beauty, the fruitful source and perfect ideal

[9] Psalm xxvi. 13.
[10] Exodus xxxiii. 13-23.
[11] 1 Timothy vi. 16.
[12] John xvii. 3.
[13] Isaias xxxiii. 17.
[14] 1 Corinthians xiii. 12.

of all beauty, goodness and perfection. And since God is an Infinite Good, the Universal Good, to use the expression of St. Thomas, the Good of all good, the fullness, the ocean of goodness, He will truly show the elect all goodness when He shows them Himself.

And if the three Apostles, who beheld upon Mount Thabor the glory of the spotless soul of Jesus radiating through His mortal frame, exclaimed in a holy transport of both fear and joy without knowing what they were saying: "Lord, it is good for us to be here," [15] what will be our sentiments, when, strengthened by the light of glory, our souls shall be admitted to contemplate at leisure, not only the transfigured Humanity of the Word made flesh, but the Divinity Itself unveiled in all Its splendor, and when, embracing in one glance all and every one of God's perfections which here below we are forced to study one by one, we shall see them fused into one pure infinite perfection—a rapturous and ineffable sight, of which nothing in all creation can give us an idea! Again, what will be our sentiments when our gaze becomes stronger and more piercing than that of the eagle, so that we shall be able to comprehend the mysteries of God's intimate life, fathom the depths of His wisdom and justice, consider the marvelous riches of His love, the abundance of His mercy, the profundity of His decrees, the wonderful operations of His grace, to discover the secret ways by which He leads each one of us to the term of our destiny!

There, our intelligence, so hungry for knowledge and so thirsty for truth, will find in the clear vision of the Word its complete satisfaction: "I will appear before Thy sight in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when Thy glory shall appear." [16] For the Divine Word is not partial or fragmentary truth, but full, total, substantial truth. And as St. Gregory remarks: "What can we

[15] Matthew xvii. 4. [16] Psalm xvi. 15.

not know when we know Him Who knows all things, and by Whom all things exist." [17] There our will, that is to say our power of loving, which nothing here can satisfy, even were it the possession of the entire world, will find in the possession of the Supreme Good the perfect satisfaction of all its desires: "Who satisfieth thy desire with good things." [18] There our heart, always restless in this life, because God, when He made it for Himself and capable of possessing Him, created depths which He alone can fill—there at last it will find its perfect rest.

III

Shall we attempt a more profound study of the nature of our Divine inheritance? Would it not be rash to attempt to describe what St. Paul acknowledged himself incapable of describing, he who was caught up to the third heaven? It would certainly be an intolerable presumption for us to speak on a subject so far above earthly conceptions, were we reduced to the light of our own poor understanding. But the Spirit "Who searcheth all things, even the deep things of God," [19] has supplied us with some precious knowledge that we cannot afford to leave unnoticed.

To help our minds to form some kind of idea of the ineffable delights of heaven, the Holy Ghost has represented it to us under divers names and figures. It is God's kingdom; the house of our heavenly Father; the true native land of souls. Again it is a banquet and a feast; a torrent of pleasures. Finally it is rest; peace and life—life without end, eternal life. Let us dwell a moment on these various appellations and endeavor to discover something of their meaning.

Heaven is represented to us as a kingdom, the king-

[17] St. Gregory, M., *Dial.* 6, iv., n. 24.

[18] Psalm cii. 5.

[19] 1 Corinthians ii. 10.

dom promised by God "to those who love Him." [20] And at the last day Our Saviour will say to His elect: "Come ye blessed of My Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." [21]

To say kingdom is to say riches, power, honors, glory and abundance of all good things. Such is heaven,[22] as said the prophet Isaias; the place in which are gathered together all possible goods of body and mind.

"What happiness!" exclaims St. Augustine, "when all evil is passed away, and all good comes forth to us; where we shall be wholly absorbed in praising God, Who shall have become all in all to us. There shall be true glory, given us not blindly nor obtained by false-hearted adulation. Every merit shall be crowned with honor. There we shall enjoy truest peace, both with ourselves and all others. The Author and Source of all virtue will reward with perfect recompense every virtuous act or thought or word, and that recompense shall be the bestowal of His own very self. 'I will be their God, and they will be My people' (Leviticus xxvi. 12); so that 'God may be all in all' (1 Corinthians xv. 28)." [23]

If in this valley of tears, God not only causes His sun to shine on all men, just and unjust alike, but also shows forth a marvelous multiplicity of most wonderful works, bringing forth flowers and fruits, giving freshness to the valleys, fertility to the plains, majesty to the mountains, harmony to the heavens—what marvelous things has He still in store for the saints in heaven, since the prophet says that only there is the Lord magnificent.[24] And if He displays in the natural order such liberality and magnificence, opening His hand and filling with blessing every living creature,[25] what will He not accomplish on the great day of reward, for those who shall

[20] James ii. 5. [21] Matthew xxv. 34. [22] Isaias xxxiii. 20.
[23] St. Augustine, *De Civit. Dei*, 1, XXII., cap. xxx., n. 1.
[24] Isaias xxxiii. 21. [25] Psalm cxliv. 16.

have served Him faithfully and loved Him perseveringly here below—for those beloved sons who, after having been humiliated, scorned and persecuted on account of His Name, at length, with outspread hands full of good deeds will appear before Him to receive their recompense? With what tenderness will He not receive them with His caresses? With what joy will He not introduce them into His kingdom, and cause them to be enthroned beside Him to reign there eternally? [26]

Heaven is in very truth our native country, the family mansion, the *rendezvous* of all of the children of God. Our native country! What a sweet name, even in this life of exile! How our hearts beat at even the mention of our home land! How glad we are to go back after a long absence! Within its borders dwell all those we have ever loved, all those we still cherish: parents, friends, acquaintances; the paternal roof; the ashes of our forefathers. There we breathe a purer air, the sun beams more brightly, the landscape seems more pleasant, the flowers are more beautiful, the fruit more delicious than elsewhere. There, instead of being alone, unknown, forgotten, we are surrounded by those who love us; we feel their love and we are happy.

And yet what we here call our native land is in reality but a stopping place; it is the wayside inn where we take shelter for the night and which we leave behind us on the morrow; the tent which the wanderer in the desert raises at evening and folds at daybreak to resume his journey. Our real native country is the land the ancient patriarchs beheld from afar off, considering it their duty to seek after it and confessing that they were pilgrims: "We have not here a lasting city, but we look for a future one." [27] What family and kindred can compare with this company of God and His angels and saints?

[26] Apocalypse xxii. 5.

[27] Hebrews xiii. 14.

There we shall find the First-Born of our race, Who was pleased to adopt us as His brothers, and invite us to share His heritage, Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, "upon Whom the angels desire to look." [28] We shall be privileged to contemplate at leisure that adorable Face, Whose features mirror forth such serene majesty, to rest our head upon the Heart that has so loved men, and to press our lips to the thrice holy wounds inflicted by sin upon Our Redeemer's hands and feet. Like the Apostles upon Mount Thabor, we shall listen to Our Lord recalling the pains which His love led him to undergo for men—sufferings and humiliations patiently borne during His sacred Passion, indeed during His whole life; His excess of mercy, which led Him to pardon our ever-recurring sinfulness; a charity that nothing could weary, neither forgetfulness, nor ingratitude, nor even betrayal. Our soul will melt with gratitude and love at the account of the wonders wrought by our sweet Saviour for our sakes, and of the many inventions of His love to bring us back to Him, and to secure for us the grace of final perseverance.

There we shall see, love and praise the most sweet, the most pure, the most holy Mother of God, the Blessed Virgin Mary, that gracious Queen whose virginal beauty will be the delight of the saints, that loving Mother so worthy of our filial love, whose tender tokens of affection will enrapture our hearts to overflowing.

There we shall rejoice in the company of the angels and look with ecstasy on those celestial hierarchies which form a world so far superior in majesty and in beauty to our own material and sensible one.

There, finally, we shall be admitted into the society of all the noble, holy, and heroic souls who have ever lived on this earth. The patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors, virgins will constitute but one

[28] 1 Peter 1. 12.

immense family whose members will be united by one bond of affection, congratulating one another on their happiness, and rejoicing together for all eternity. All discordant notes will be excluded from this place; there only joy shall reign, a spirit of content without alloy. The sinners and the unworthy are banished from this kingdom; only the saints who with a common voice sing the praises of their Creator and Redeemer are there. Oh glorious heaven, our eternal home, when shall it be given us to see thee? "Glorious things are said of thee, O city of God!" [29]

IV

Heaven is also a banquet, a feast prepared by the Father of the family for the myriad of children who gather around Him. On certain solemn occasions, all the members of a family are invited to meet under the paternal roof, and, if they are able to take their seats at the same table and converse together for a short space of time, these gatherings of a day are remembered as among the happiest moments of a lifetime. And what are the topics of these family conversations; what is the spirit of the gatherings held there? The different members of the family speak of their fears, their joys, their troubles—yes, their troubles especially, for such are the things that most abound in this land of exile. How frequently, too, there is present some member of the family whose misconduct or unhappiness strikes a note of grief in the hearts of the others! Then again, how many vacant places! How many absent members will never appear there again! And after a few short hours of happiness, not unmixed with sadness, the members must again part and each go his own way. Now the great gathering of the children of God will be held in

[29] Psalm lxxxvi. 3.

heaven. Not one of the guests will be absent, no one will cause sorrow or affliction to the others, and the knowledge of an approaching separation will never cast its gloom upon the joys of that reunion.

Of all feasts, the most splendid and the most solemn and at the same time the most replete with joy is a family nuptial feast. Now the happiness of heaven is essentially centred in the nuptial feast of the beatified soul and the Lamb.[30] And even in this life, Our Lord has prepared a sumptuous repast for His faithful followers. It is the Eucharistic Table, where He distributes a living and life-giving Bread, a Bread come down from heaven and delicious in a sovereign degree.[31] Yet if He is pleased to give Himself thus to us in this life, it is only in an imperfect way; and if He becomes the food of our souls, He does not fully satisfy their hunger. "I possess the Divine Word," says St. Bernard, "but yet I am in the flesh; I banquet on truth, but it is in the Sacrament. An angel is nourished by the fat of the wheat and its very substance; and I must be content with the shell of the grain; the sound of the letter of truth; the veil of faith." [32]

This is why Our Saviour, before ascending into heaven, announced to His apostles that He was going to prepare them another banquet in His kingdom whither they were all invited to sit at His table: "And I dispose to you, as My Father hath to Me, a kingdom; that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom." [33] It is unnecessary to say that the Divine Master was not speaking of food for the body, since in heaven our bodies will no longer need nourishment. When, therefore, it is said of the elect that in heaven they eat and drink at the table of God, it is meant that they share in the very happiness of God, seeing Him as He sees Himself. This

[30] Apocalypse xix. 9. [31] John vi. 41.
[32] St. Bernard, in Canticles, serm. xxxiii., n. 7. [33] Luke xxii. 29, 30.

is the rich banquet of God to which all the elect are invited.[34]

Then we shall no longer partake of the Body and Blood of Christ, but the Divinity itself will become our food. What a reward to see God, to be with God, to live of and by God! Then will be consummated that blessed union between God and the soul, inaugurated here below by grace; for since we shall possess God in a perfect manner as the highest Truth and the Sovereign Good, we shall be joined to Him in an ineffable union.[35] To all the heavenly Spouse addresses these words: "Eat, My friends, and drink, and be inebriated, My dearly beloved." [36] Unlike a precious beverage confined to a vessel and soon consumed, the beatitude of heaven is a river which will never cease to flow; it is of a torrent of delights, of glory and of peace, at which the elect will forever drink.[37] Let no one take exception to such expressions, dictated as they are by the Holy Ghost Himself; for if there is a shameful inebriation, unworthy of a rational being, there is as well a lawful and a holy one, the inebriation of joy and of love. Was not St. Mary Magdalen of Pazzi inebriated with the Divine love, when she used to give vent to the passionate words which re-ëchoed throughout the walls of her convent: "Love is not known, love is not loved?" And St. Francis Xavier, was not he also beside himself with delight, when in the midst of his apostolic labors, and whilst overwhelmed, we might say, by the celestial consolations which flooded his soul, he would cry out: "Enough, O Lord, enough; spare my poor heart, I can bear no more!" If man can taste such joys in this land of exile, what shall be his bliss, we ask, in our native land, heaven?

[34] Apocalypse xix. 17.
[35] Canticles v. 1.
[36] Apocalypse xix. 9.
[37] Psalm xxxv. 9.

V

Heaven is called by yet other names, all of them rich in promise and replete with mysteries. Their study will be a source of edification for us, telling of the greatness of our future felicity, the inheritance set apart for the saints. Heaven is rest, peace and life; rest after work, peace after war, life eternal after death. Who does not desire rest, who does not cherish life? Yet rest is usually earned by hard work, peace is often won only through war, and St. Paul tells us of our stern privilege of "always bearing about with us in our mortal body the mortification of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may be made manifest in our bodies." [38]

The present life is the time for work, fruitful work; and also the seedtime of other good works. Like the farmer who bears the burden and heat of the day, faces the inclemency of the seasons, and wearies his sturdy arms in furrowing the soil before intrusting to it the seed which is the germ of the future harvest, so the Christian must attend, without ever tiring, to the good works which constitute his every day task. He must devote himself to prayer, yield to obedience, bow his shoulders to the yoke of the cross, and bear without complaint the burden of weariness, of sorrows, and of tribulations which form the daily bread of an exile. Add to this the privations, sufferings, poverty, contradictions, painful disputes, ingratitudes, many hidden pangs in the heart, and many secret hurts—all the more bitter and difficult to bear, in that they must remain often without expression or witness or comforter. In a word, the Christian should hearken to our Sacred Books: "Going, they went and wept, casting their seeds." [39]

Then, as if all this were not enough for his feeble frame to bear, still other trials await the Christian.

[38] 2 Corinthians iv. 10. [39] Psalm cxxv. 6.

Now it is sickness which steals upon him; or it is death ruthlessly mowing down those who are dearest to him; again it is the sight of injustice triumphant, or of persecution inflicted on those who strive to be faithful to their duty. Now he is beset by temptations, and must incessantly meet the attacks of the enemies of his salvation; he must begin over and over again the strife against the bad instincts of his nature and maintain a daily fight against his passions, so desperate and so terrible a combat that the Apostle himself was forced to cry out: "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" [40]

But what joy and gladness, what rapture, when, once freed from the prison of the body, shielded forever against the attacks of the enemy and entirely purified, the Christian soul will be introduced into heaven, there to behold Our Lord hastening towards him, His countenance smiling, His arms extended, His lips addressing him: "Arise, make haste, My love, My dove, My beautiful one, and come;" "the winter is now past"—thy season of sorrow and suffering; "the rain," that is to say, the time of tears—"is over and gone;" "the flowers have appeared in our land"—tokens of eternal fruits of joy and love; "the voice of the turtle is heard"—the sweet welcome of My Mother and My angels; "come and receive the crown." [41]

Then, according to the promise of Holy Writ: "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and death shall be no more, nor mourning, nor crying, nor sorrow shall be any more, for the former things are passed away." [42] The sacred writer does not merely say that their tears will be dried, or that the elect themselves will wipe away the tears from their own eyes, but that God in Person will perform this office; as He said of old:

[40] Romans vii. 24. [41] Canticles ii. 11, *et seq.*
[42] Apocalypse xxi. 4.

"I, I Myself will comfort you;" [43] and again: "As one whom the mother caresseth, so will I comfort you, and you shall be comforted in Jerusalem." [44] If it is sweet and soothing for a sick person to feel a friendly hand, that of a mother or a spouse, drying the sweat or the tears from his face, what joy will it be to feel upon our brow the hand of God, a thousand times more sweet and tender than that of a mother?

This is what strengthens the just in this life in the midst of their trials, and comforts them in their afflictions. They know, with certainty, that their sufferings will last only for a time, while the reward will be eternal. This is why they are comforted by the words of the Apostle: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this time, are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come, that shall be revealed in us." [45] And again: "For that which is at present momentary and light of our tribulation, worketh for us above measure exceedingly an eternal weight of glory." [46] And far from allowing themselves to be discouraged by the miseries of this life, good Christians rather rejoice, convinced as they are, that if they suffer with Jesus Christ, they will also be glorified with Him,[47] and that after sharing in His sufferings they will be admitted to share in His rest.

What will be the nature of this rest? Will it be inaction, immobility, a sort of sweet eternal sleep? Certainly not. The promised rest is an animated and fruitful rest, according to the words of the prophet: "And My people shall sit in the beauty of peace, and in the tabernacles of confidence, and in wealthy rest." [48] It is a rest in which the most wonderful activities abound, causing no fatigue, interrupted by no necessity, and productive of ineffable joys. It is the generous, unceasing, continual activity of a soul that has reached its term,

[43] Isaias li. 12. [44] Isaias lxvi. 13. [45] Romans viii. 18.
[46] 2 Corinthians iv. 17. [47] Romans viii. 17. [48] Isaias xxxii. 18.

and reposes in God as God reposes in it: "Now there remaineth a rest for the people of God. For whosoever hath entered into his rest, the same also hath rested from his works, as God did from His." [49] In ceasing to create, God does not cease to act: "My Father worketh even until now, and I work." [50] His activity displays itself chiefly within His own being; He contemplates Himself, loves Himself, and is rejoiced in His own self; He is happy; He is ever renewed beatitude. And since in heaven we shall be like unto Him, seeing and loving Him as He sees and loves Himself, we shall share in His happiness and live of His life.

Nothing will arise to trouble or interrupt our contemplation of God; neither the material occupations which now take up so much of our time, nor the works of mercy, which will have no place in a state where misery and affliction are unknown; nor, finally, sleep, which is so necessary on earth. Interior struggles as well as all external battles against the enemies of our salvation, will have ceased; for henceforth all the frontiers of our soul will be protected against their invasions. Peace, glorious and unchangeable, will be our lot. Oh! sweet repose! Oh! happy holidays, wholly given to the most beautiful spectacle ever vouchsafed to a rational creature, since this contemplation of Divine things constitutes God's own happiness.

The intellect, the noblest of our faculties, will play its part in this contemplation; but the heart, too, will also have a great share, for vision begets love. It is only in heaven that the precept of love will be truly fulfilled, for we shall love God "with our whole heart, with our whole soul, with all our strength, and with all our mind." [51] We shall love Him without respite, interruption, hesitancy; without those perpetual changes from ardor to coldness so humiliating for holy souls, to

[49] Hebrews iv. 9, 10. [50] John v. 17. [51] Luke x. 27.

whom indeed they are a cause of desolation of spirit. We shall love Him; and love will overflow our hearts, and, rising to our lips, will break forth in praise and thanksgiving: "There we shall rest and we shall see; there we shall see and we shall love; there we shall love and we shall praise." [52] "Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house, O Lord; they shall praise Thee forever and ever." [53] Instead of translating itself, as love does here below, into desires, bewailings, weariness, it will pour itself out in canticles of joy and songs of gladness.

But is it not to be feared that rest will grow tiresome and that continual praise will at length prove distasteful? St. Augustine answers: "If thou ceasest to love, thou shalt cease to praise. But since the object of thy love can never cease to satisfy thee, thy praise can never cease to be a joy to thee." [54] If one ray of Divine beauty, falling on the forehead of a creature, transforms this creature into a saint, and renders it so amiable that it captivates all hearts; if the more we contemplate this creature the more we are charmed; what invincible charm shall not the clear vision and the continuous contemplation of God's infinite beauty exert upon the minds and hearts of the elect? And if it is so sweet to love and to be loved by a simple creature like one of ourselves, what joy will not that soul experience which feels itself unceasingly loved with the strength of the most Holy Trinity? What more could such a soul desire, unless it be the prolongation of this happiness! And as the soul knows it to be eternal, how could it not be fully satisfied? [55]

This is, so far as we have been able to express it, what the inheritance of the children of God consists in; this is the beatitude promised by Our Lord, under the name

[52] St. Augustine, *De Civit. Dei.* [53] Psalm lxxxiii.
[54] St. Augustine, in Psalm lxxxv., n. 24.
[55] *De Civit. Dei*, 1, XXII., c. xxx., n. 1.

of eternal life, to those whom He calls His sheep: "My sheep hear My voice . . . and they follow Me; and I give them eternal life;" [56] that is to say, the direct and immediate contemplation of God's infinite beauty, a perpetual ecstasy of love, and praise without end. If in the mind of the Psalmist, or rather in that of the Holy Ghost Who inspired his words: "One day in Thy courts is better than thousands," [57] what then are we to think, what are we to say of the life that awaits us in heaven; so full, so holy, so overflowing with gladness, life immune from the changes of day and night and from the vicissitudes of sorrow and joy; especially when we remember that it will have no end? It is not enough, however, to say that it will be without end; like the eternity of God, of which it is a participation, this life knows neither change, nor succession, past nor future. It consists in an indivisible and immutable present, in the entire, perfect and undiminishing possession of the Sovereign Good.

Meditating on the grandeur of this happiness, how could the just soul, still exiled on this earth, not exclaim with the spouse of the Canticle of Canticles: "O Thou Whom my soul loveth, show me where Thou feedest, where Thou liest in the mid-day." [58] St. Bernard comments on this passage as follows: "Here below the soul's light is not clear, its refection is not perfect, its abiding place is not stable. But show me where Thou feedest, where Thou restest at noon-day. O truest mid-day, O fullness of warmth and light, O sun that never sets, driving away every shadow, drying up every foul humor and expelling every infectious vapor! . . . Show me Thy place of rest, of light, and of peace, O Lord, where I may contemplate Thee in all Thy sweetness and beauty forever." [59]

[56] John x. 28. [57] Psalm lxxxiii. 11. [58] Canticles i. 6.
[59] St. Bernard, in Canticles, Serm. xxxiii., 6, 7.

CHAPTER V

Effects of the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The Infused Virtues, Theological and Moral

I

If the beatitude of heaven were given to us merely by reason of our rights as heirs, no effort could be required of us to merit it by our good works. All we should need would be to possess with and through sanctifying grace the title and character of adopted sons of God. As a matter of fact, this is all that is required of baptized children until they have reached the age of reason. For adults, however, it is otherwise. According to the words of St. Augustine: "He Who created thee without thee, will not justify thee without thee." [1]

The least we can say is that after being deified, raised through the communication of the most wondrous favor unto a share in the very being and life of God, it was altogether congruous that man should be expected to act in a Divine manner, exercising the privileges of his new life by becoming a coöperator with God, and thereby the secondary instrument of his own salvation. This is why the Council of Trent, infallibly interpreting revealed truth, declares explicitly that: "It behooved that eternal life should be offered to those who are justified not only as a grace mercifully promised by Our Saviour to God's children, but also as the recompense of their own good works and the reward of their merits,

[1] St. Augustine, *De Verbis Apost.*, sermo XV., cap. xi.

as a crown of justice which the just Judge reserves for whomsoever hath lawfully striven for it." [2]

This also is the reason why St. Paul exhorts us to abound in every good work, firmly convinced that our labor will not be in vain in the Lord, but on the contrary will receive a great reward.[3] To stimulate our zeal and arouse our indolence, he then reminds us that "we are saved through hope;" [4] and that since we are always in danger of losing the grace we have received, we should "work out our salvation with fear and trembling." [5]

Uniting his voice with that of St. Paul, the head of the Apostolic College stirs us with these words: "Wherefore, brethren, labor the more, that by good works you may make sure your calling and election. For doing these things you shall not sin at any time. For so an entrance shall be ministered you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." [6]

However, that we may merit, that we may elicit acts in harmony with our supernatural elevation, and thus progress towards the higher end to which the Divine mercy has destined us, and which nature, left to its own forces, could never attain—in a word, that we may act in a God-like manner, the bestowal of additional forces, powers, energies and special helps is indispensable. God has not refused these; He proffers them in such abundance and variety as is truly astonishing. Just as we are endowed in the natural order with a whole system of intellectual and sensible faculties, which are rooted in the essence of the soul, constituting so many proximate principles of action, so also in the supernatural order, from grace itself there flows into the powers

[2] *Conc. Trid.*, sess. VI., c. xvi.
[3] 1 Corinthians xv. 58; Hebrews x. 35.
[4] Romans viii. 24.
[5] Philippians ii. 12.
[6] 2 Peter i. 10, 11.

of the soul certain forces by which those powers are moved into action, perfecting, exalting and elevating our faculties above their natural level, and rendering them capable of eliciting supernatural acts.

Actual grace (*i. e.*, the supernatural aid given for every particular good act) would suffice us, it is true, to perform this kind of operation; and as a matter of fact God uses these temporary helps—actual graces—to assist the sinner who has not yet been justified to perform acts preparatory to his justification. However, when the supernatural life has reached the perfect state in a soul, when this life has been communicated in a definitive way, God no longer has recourse to these passing graces to help the soul to exercise the functions of its new and higher life. Instead, He infuses into the soul certain principles of activity proportioned to the operations this soul is to accomplish, certain forces, abiding supernatural qualities, or, in one word, certain spiritual habits, the purpose of which is to enable it to perform, as if naturally—*"connaturaliter"*—supernatural works. These habits are known as the infused virtues and the Gifts of the Holy Ghost.

The whole supernatural organism has been so admirably described by Mgr. Gay, that we gladly give our readers some paragraphs: "The Divine action in a just soul is exceedingly admirable, both as to its enlightenment and its strength. Above all else is the fact that God shines and works in the soul's very essence. It is into its depths that He pours the root-grace which we call sanctifying, and which is at once the condition and the primary effect of His supernatural presence. Supernatural grace becomes at once both our title to all other benefits and, as it were, the open door to their introduction, giving the entire soul up to the active operation of every Divine influence, as a matter of right, of power, and of principle. It is by sanctifying grace that the in-

dwelling Deity sets the soul free from sin, makes it guileless, gives it a new, a youthful and a purified life, open and receptive to all the influences to which He submits it, and docile to all the Divine impulses He will impart to it. It is by sanctifying grace that He holds, as it were, in His Divine grasp the roots of that soul's virtue, and, engrafting them upon His own being, causes the soul to drink in and absorb the thrice holy sap of His love, and be made capable of projecting a Divine force into all of those wondrous powers by which it extends and enlarges itself as does a tree by means of its branches." [7]

Thus our natural powers, numerous, varied and admirable as they are in themselves, are by this interior influence Divinely perfected, each according to its order, its function and its end. Whilst receiving qualities essentially new, superior and supernatural, the soul is made supple to obey and energetic to utilize the Divine intimations, being made the more passive under the touch of God's hand, and at the same time the more alert and active in His service.

That service consists essentially in the practise of those sovereign virtues which are called theological or Divine because they concern God directly, namely, faith, hope and love. These are the leading virtues which are known as *infused*, being penetrated through and through by the infusion of sanctifying grace. "Thus sanctifying grace," says the author just quoted, "is like sunlight, which though in itself absolutely one, yet beams forth in several colors, but principally in three." These three great virtues, faith, hope and charity, thus infused with supernatural life, are the immediate and primary effects of sanctifying grace in the soul and life of the just man.

But there are other virtues subsidiary to them which are also called and which are infused virtues, though of

[7] Monsignor Gay, *De la Vie et des Vertus Chrétiennes*, I.

a lower order than faith, hope and charity, from which they are derived; they are the so-called moral virtues, the chief ones being prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance—known as the cardinal or hinge virtues. Grouped with them are several other moral virtues, such as humility, obedience, chastity, self-denial, etc. All of these virtues, including the cardinal and the others, are, as already said, called the moral virtues, and they are likewise *infused* virtues, being, as it were, saturated with sanctifying grace and elevated thereby as to motive and by merit to the supernatural order, their excellence and dignity being derived through the theological virtues. The Sevenfold Gifts of the Holy Ghost, as well as His Twelve Fruits—about which we shall soon treat in detail—follow on after the infused theological and moral virtues.

Although it is certain that the Sacrament of Confirmation has for its proper office the imparting of the *fullness* of all of these Divine favors, nevertheless merely to be in the state of grace, as is a little child after Baptism, is to possess all supernatural virtues in root and essence, only awaiting the full use of reason for their development according to the will of God in each particular case.

II

Thus we are made acquainted with the Divine elements which go to make up the supernatural life of the soul of a just man: sanctifying grace, sometimes called habitual grace; the infused theological and moral virtues; and the Gifts and the Fruits of the Holy Ghost. Of these last two we shall treat more fully later on. At present we shall briefly resume the office of grace and of the virtues infused by it.

Let us recall, that to fit man to elicit such aids as will finally lead him to the beatific vision, God first pours into his soul sanctifying grace, which functions

in the supernatural order as the human soul in the natural order. Just as the soul by uniting with the body transforms a vile and inert mass into a living human being, so grace, the true form of a far superior order of life, communicates to him who receives it a new being, spiritual and Divine, which makes him a Christian and a child of God. And because being is the proper perfection of essence, just as operation is the proper perfection of the faculties, grace it is that is communicated to the very essence of the soul, which it makes participate in the Divine nature; whereas the virtues which accompany grace have their seat in the different human faculties, which they elevate and perfect by adding to their natural forces a higher and more powerful energy, which is supernatural.

No wonder then that, like the soul, which does not act directly through its own substance, but only through the intermediary of its faculties, so sanctifying grace does not operate immediately of itself, but through the agency of the infused virtues and the Gifts of the Holy Ghost, all of which act as its faculties. Sanctifying grace is, it is true, a principle of life and of operation; yet it is a remote or indirect and not an immediate or proximate principle. Grace is the root or trunk of the tree; the supernatural virtues are the branches; and as everyone knows, it is the branches that blossom and bear fruit.

We have just mentioned the supernatural infused virtues. They are called supernatural because they are beyond the reach of nature; and are also called infused, because, contrariwise to the merely natural or humanly acquired virtues—which result from man's activity and are acquired through the repetition of the same devout acts—the infused virtues can proceed only from God direct, Who Himself infuses them into the soul without our effective coöperation, although not without our con-

sent. They are sometimes known as the Christian virtues, because they belong exclusively to one who is truly Christian, *i. e.*, to a living member of Jesus Christ. They come with grace, grow and develop with grace, and are lost with grace; with the exception, however, of faith and hope; for these virtues continue in the sinner until he banishes them from his soul by deliberate act in direct opposition to belief in God's truth or trust in His goodness. The infused virtues are therefore planted in the soul to lift up and transform our natural energies that they may be capable of performing actions beyond nature's powers and meritorious for eternal life. They are grafted on to the soul like scions or grafts of a better and nobler tree grafted upon a wild stock. In passing through the graft the natural sap is purified of its defects, so that the tree which before bore sour and wild fruits now yields sweet and delicious fruits.

We have also seen that in the first rank of the infused virtues must be placed the three theological virtues, faith, hope and love, called theological because they have God as their immediate object, because He alone can infuse them into the soul, and because it is to His revelation alone that we are indebted for the knowledge of them. It would be impossible to doubt for a moment the existence of these virtues, since St. Paul makes such an explicit mention of them in his first Epistle to the Corinthians: "Now there remain faith, hope, charity; these three; but the greater of these is charity." [8] The Council of Trent is not less formal in teaching that: "In justification man receives faith, hope and charity, together with the remission of his sins; these virtues are infused at the same time into his soul by Jesus Christ upon Whom he is grafted." [9]

These proofs from authority will appear even more convincing, if we consider the purpose towards which

[8] 1 Corinthians xiii. 13. [9] *Conc. Trid.*, sess. vi. c. 7.

our actions must tend. Were this end nothing more than a natural beatitude, we should need only our natural forces plus the Divine help. Since, however, God has been pleased in His infinite goodness to call us to a supernatural end, *i. e.*, to a share in the happiness proper and natural to Himself, and to the possession of goods far beyond the reach of our natural faculties, it becomes necessary for Him to add to our natural forces other and far more powerful principles of action, energies of a Divine order proportioned to the end we are seeking. These principles of a superior order are, to begin with, the three theological virtues of faith, hope and charity, which direct us to our final end, God.

What, let us ask, is necessary in order that a rational being shall be made capable of tending in a correct and regular way towards any determined end? He needs knowledge and desire. Knowledge, or he would not know what goal to seek; desire, or he would never trouble to seek it. Hence the significance of the virtue of faith. Efficacious desire of some good, however, presupposes a certain assurance that we can obtain this good, for a wise man does not set out towards a goal he knows is beyond his reach. Hence the significance of the virtue of hope. It also presupposes love, for we desire only what we love. Thus we learn the necessity of all three of the theological virtues to dispose our soul to advance, and to render it capable of advancing freely, towards its supernatural destiny. Faith is necessary, for it reveals to us the sublime end to which we are called, viz., the vision and possession of God as He sees and possesses Himself; hope, because, depending on the helps which have been promised us, we confidently await from the hand of our heavenly Father the eternal beatitude and the necessary or useful means to attain it; charity, because this virtue enables us to love above all things Him Who is infinite goodness.

These are the three principal virtues that are to give the true orientation to our lives and exercise over our entire conduct a most salutary influence. Faith, called by the Council of Trent: "The beginning of salvation, the foundation and root of all justification; without which it is impossible to please God and to attain to the company of His children." [10] Hope, that strong anchor of trust which we cast out towards heaven, that the storms and tempests of this present life may not separate us from God nor cause our fragile vessel to drift away from the port of salvation. Finally charity or love, that incomparable queen of virtues, which gives to the others their form and their final touch of perfection by directing them straight towards God, the Supreme Good and the one object of charity, so that the actions we elicit under the influence of any and all other virtues may be made meritorious unto eternal life.

III

And yet, however excellent and valuable the theological virtues may be, they are not sufficient of themselves to govern the life of a Christian; other virtues must concur in this complex work. We refer to what are called the moral virtues.

The first and most indispensable condition for salvation consists, as we have seen, in being rightly directed to our final end. However, this right disposition must be had not only in reference to the end, but also in reference to the means by which we are to reach it. Furthermore, we have duties to perform not only towards God, but also towards our neighbor, as well as towards ourselves. If, therefore, we feel the need of the theological virtues to incline our intellect to cling to God as Truth *par excellence*, to dispose our will to tend lovingly and trustfully towards Him as the object of our

[10] *Ibid.*, vi., c. 8.

supreme happiness, to love Him as the infinite Goodness, other virtues, as we have seen, are equally imperative. These provide for the faithful and easy performance of our moral obligations: prudence, to direct and guide our usual and daily conduct and to teach us what we are to do and what we are to avoid; justice, to enable us to render to God and man their due; fortitude, to assist us in overcoming the difficulties we are sure to meet with in the performance of our duties; and temperance, to curb the pleasures of the senses and keep them within the limits of reason.

With these four principal virtues, commonly known as cardinal virtues, because they are as the hinges upon which our whole moral life turns, are connected several secondary and dependent moral virtues, each with its own proper object and purpose, and contributing in its own sphere to the right ordering and sanctification of earthly existence, even in its minutest particulars.

Yet, are these moral virtues, thus being forms of and connected with prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance, like the virtues of faith, hope and charity? Are they infused by God into the soul to become the organs and instruments of our supernatural life; or must we acquire them by repeated acts? Are they Gifts of the Holy Spirit, or products of nature? In a word, must we admit of the existence in the just soul, besides the natural moral virtues which make an upright man, and are acquired by the frequent repetition of the same acts, another set of virtues, analogous but of a higher order, Christian or supernatural moral virtues which God would produce directly in the soul with grace, and which would be the exclusive property of the adopted children of God?

The great majority of theologians have always taught as being more probable, the opinion that the moral virtues are infused. We are unable, it is true, to adduce

in support of this opinion, as we did above for the theological virtues, the authority of the Council of Trent, for no mention was made there of the moral virtues. However, it would be a strange mistake to base upon this silence an attack on the common teachings of the theological schools. If the Council does not speak of the infused moral virtues, the reason is simple: the Fathers of the Council wished to remain faithful to the programme which they had decided upon from the very beginning, viz., to concentrate all their efforts upon the truths denied by heretics.

And in order that no one might mistake its real intent, the official Catechism of the Council of Trent, drawn up under the order of the Council and approved by that great Pope, St. Pius V., enumerates among the effects of Baptism: 'The most splendid train of all the virtues which accompany the progress of grace in the soul." [11] Such expressions would sound very odd were it question only of the three theological virtues.

This is not the only occasion on which the Church has manifested her opinion. Already in the twelfth century, when controversy arose touching the effects of Baptism in children, some theologians contended that the sacrament merely remits original sin without confering either grace or the infused virtues, since the child was in no need of these virtues until he was capable of eliciting the acts they inspired, and others held the entirely contrary opinion. The illustrious Pontiff, Pope Innocent III., without settling the matter disputed, remarked that the assertion made by those who pretended that "neither faith, nor charity, nor the other virtues are infused in the souls of little children, since they cannot give their consent," was an opinion not admitted by the greater number of theologians.[12]

[11] *Catech. Conc.*, part 2, *de Bap.*, n. 51.
[12] Innocent III., c. *"Majores, de Baptismo."*

The majority of theologians, therefore, were of the opinion that grace and the virtues were infused as habits of mind not only in the souls of adults, but also in those of little children. But of what virtues was there question? Undoubtedly of the theological virtues; but also of the other virtues, according to the expression of Innocent III. himself. Had he meant to speak only of the theological virtues, why would he have not done the simple and most natural thing and completed his enumeration by naming the virtue of hope with those of faith and charity? Else why this expression, "the other virtues," to designate only one virtue?

IV

A century later, at the ecumenical Council of Vienne in 1312, another sovereign Pontiff, Pope Clement V., resuming the same question, always a subject of debate between Scotists and Thomists, made a clear pronouncement in favor of the opinion of St. Thomas, without making it a definition of faith. With the approbation of the Council he declared it to be the more probable opinion, and the one more in accordance with the teaching of the saints and of modern theologians, that formative grace and the virtues are conferred in Baptism as well upon infants as upon grown persons.[13]

In presence of such authority, theologians have since generally come over to the opinion which admits that the moral virtues are also infused virtues. Both Scripture and Tradition seem to support the same opinion. Indeed, Holy Writ speaks of the cardinal virtues as not the result of human effort, but the fruit of Divine wisdom: "For Wisdom teacheth temperance and prudence, and justice, and fortitude, which are such things as men can have nothing more profitable in life." [14] St.

[13] Clement V., in *Conc. Vienn., De Summa Trinit., et Cathol. Fide.*
[14] Wisdom viii. 7.

Augustine also declares that: "The virtues which should guide us through life are four in number, according to the teaching of the wise and of Scripture. The first is called prudence, which causes us to discriminate between good and evil. The second is justice, by means of which we render to everyone whatsoever is due to him. The third is temperance, by which we put a bridle upon our passions; the fourth is fortitude, which makes us capable of bearing all that is painful. These virtues are given us by God together with His grace in this valley of tears." [15]

A very weighty theological reason is furnished by St. Thomas in support of the same doctrine. Effects, he says, must be proportionate to their cause. Now all virtues, whether intellectual or moral, which we are able to acquire through our actions, proceed from certain principles placed by nature in the depths of our being to meet certain natural needs of which they are the offshoots. In the order of grace God has substituted for these principles the theological virtues, which set us in order towards our supernatural end. To have harmony, therefore, in the Divine plan, we must be granted other supernatural habits to correspond to these Divinely infused theological virtues, having the same origin and belonging to the same order, namely, the supernaturalizing of our whole moral life, and of rendering its actions meritorious for heaven; habits which will be to the theological virtues what the human, intellectual or moral virtues are to the natural principles from which they proceed.[16]

But we must not deceive ourselves; moral virtues are not at all comparable with the theological virtues. Acting, as they do, from natural tendencies, their activities can never extend beyond the bounds of nature. But

[15] St. Augustine, in Psalm lxxxiii., n. 11.
[16] St. Thomas, I., II., q. lxiii., a. 3.

under the influence and dominion of Divine charity they can, of course, produce meritorious actions.

The Christian, therefore, can possess two sets of moral virtues specifically different one from the other. The first will be natural and acquired, the second supernatural and infused; a natural prudence and a supernatural prudence; a natural justice and a supernatural justice, etc., quite distinct one from another. Thus, while the mere natural virtue of temperance makes us use a moderation dictated by reason and consisting in the avoidance of all excesses calculated to harm the health of our bodies or the full exercise of our mental faculties, on the other hand, the infused or Christian virtue of temperance rises higher, and disposes us, under the direction of faith, to chastise our bodies and bring them into subjection by fasting and abstinence, vigils and the other mortifications. The same is true of the other virtues which differ according as they are a product of nature or of the infusion of grace. The natural virtues may even be found in a sinner; the supernatural are the exclusive privilege of the just.

Whence then the difficulties and reluctancies experienced in the practice of certain virtues, even by souls who have already been justified, and who, therefore, it seems, should possess all these virtues? Is not the most authentic sign of the presence of a habit of mind and heart the facility, and even the pleasure, which the possessor experiences in performing its necessary acts?

We have taken this objection from St. Thomas; he will furnish us also with the answer: "It not seldom happens that one has a virtuous habit of mind or of heart—intellectual or moral—and yet finds difficulty in eliciting its acts, finding no satisfaction or pleasure in it on account of certain external obstacles. Thus is a man of learning hindered by sleep, or by some other difficulty. It is thus, too, that one who possesses moral

virtues may be hindered from practising them in certain particulars by bad tendencies contracted previously to his acquiring his virtuous habits—bad tendencies which do not expel the good habits because they are not absolutely and willfully contrary to them. But solid virtues are not thus hindered, for they are incessantly renewed and as incessantly act towards the destruction of the vicious tendencies opposing them." [17]

And we must add that it is not universally true that the justified sinner, experiences after a sincere and generous conversion, the same reluctance towards the practice of virtue as he did before. How many difficulties which at first sight seemed insurmountable are suddenly removed, under the action of grace, and disappear as by enchantment. Witness St. Augustine, who writes of himself: "How sweet did it seem to me in a moment to taste no more the sweetness of folly; it was a joy to cast away what I had feared to lose. For Thou did cast it out, Thou true and sovereign sweetness. Thou didst cast it out and fill its place; Thou Who art sweeter than any pleasure, though not to flesh and blood. . . Henceforth my soul was delivered from the gnawing anxieties of ambition and gain, from wallowing in the mud of lust; and I prattled in my joy like a child to Thee, O Lord, my Light, my Wealth, my Salvation." [18]

[17] St. Thomas, Ia., IIæ., q. xv., a. 3, ad. 2.
[18] St. Augustine, *Conf.*, lib. IX., c. 1.

CHAPTER VI

Effects of the Indwelling of the Holy Ghost *(Continued)*

The Gifts of the Holy Ghost

I

The Holy Ghost brings not only grace and the Christian virtues to the soul in which He makes His abode, but also various endowments called the Seven Gifts of the Holy Ghost—with a special meaning the word Gifts —the *sacrum septenarium,* as the Church calls them. What are we to understand by these Gifts? What is their purpose and their function in the supernatural life? Are they really distinct from the infused virtues, and are they to be looked upon as necessary for salvation? These are questions which must be answered.

First, then, what is precisely the nature of the Gifts of the Holy Ghost? Primarily, they are gratuitous favors, as their name indicates; and in this they are like the other gifts of grace. However, the generic term, "Gift," has come to have in Christian language a very precise meaning, and is determined and restricted to certain exalted perfections which God communicates gratuitously to the just soul, with the purpose of rendering it docile to His Divine inspirations.

Like sanctifying grace, and like the infused virtues to which they bear more than one resemblance, the Gifts of the Holy Ghost are habits or dispositions towards good, which exist in the soul as determined and con-

tinuous qualities. Therefore, they are not acts, but principles of action; nor are they actual motions, or passing helps of grace destined to set our faculties to functioning, but qualities, forces imparted to the soul in view of certain supernatural operations.

In speaking of these Gifts, the Scriptures themselves depict them to us as existing in a stable manner, as remaining in the soul of the just man. Referring to the Word made flesh, Isaias says: "The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him; the Spirit of wisdom, and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of fortitude, the Spirit of knowledge, and of godliness. And he shall be filled with the Spirit of the fear of the Lord."[1] The doctors of the Church have applied these words to the living members of the mystical body of Our Lord, which share in the privileges of their Head. St. Gregory the Great tells us, that "in these Gifts, without which no one can attain to eternal life, the Holy Spirit dwells in all His elect; in others He dwells, but not in a stable manner."[2]

With the Angelic Doctor, we could define the Gifts of the Holy Ghost as spiritual habits, or abiding and essentially supernatural qualities, the purpose of which is to perfect man's nature, and to dispose him to respond promptly to the motions of the Holy Spirit.[3] We must not conclude, however, from these words that the Gifts of the Holy Ghost are merely passive dispositions, a kind of spiritual unction, the purpose of which is to make pliant our faculties that they may offer no resistance to the action of Divine grace. They render the soul both docile to God's call and positively energetic in action.

The moral virtues, as we have said, are intended to subject man's appetitive faculties to the control of right reason and render them docile to its demands, although

[1] Isaias xi. 2, 3. [2] St. Gregory, M., I. ii., *Moral.*, cap. xxviii.
[3] St. Thomas, I., II., q. lxviii., a. 3.

they are, at the same time, sources of activity. In like manner the Gifts are at once supernatural energies and principles of supernatural action. We have proof of this in those great qualities known as Beatitudes, which, by the very reason of their perfection, must be attributed to the Gifts rather than to the virtues, and which proceed from the Gifts as an action proceeds from a habit.

Yet, if this be the case, it may be asked, in what do the Gifts differ from the infused virtues? A few theologians are of the opinion that they are not really distinct, and that Gifts and virtues are meant to designate one and the same thing. If, these theologians tell us, you consider the supernatural habits as gratuitous favors we receive from the Divine goodness, these favors are called Gifts; if you view them as principles of action, they are called virtues.

This explanation seems very simple, yet it is hardly reconcilable with certain incontestable truths. For, if the Gifts of the Holy Ghost are identical with the virtues, how is it that Our Lord, Who possessed all the Gifts, did not possess all the infused virtues; not faith, since the presence of this virtue in His soul was incompatible with the direct vision of the Divine Essence which Our Saviour never failed to enjoy; not hope, since the perfection of His comprehensive possession of all beatitude excluded it altogether; not penance, since He was innocence itself, and impeccable? Furthermore, if the Gifts and the virtues are not things really distinct, we would have to explain why certain Gifts, like the fear of God, are not mentioned in the enumeration of the virtues; and, *vice versa*, why certain virtues find no place in the list of the Gifts. For these and other reasons, the great majority of theologians hold with St. Thomas to a real distinction between the Gifts and the virtues, basing the distinction upon the diversity of

motive-forces to which man yields, and which he obeys in the practice of good.

If, says the Angelic Doctor, we wish to make a clear distinction between the Gifts and the virtues, we must hold firm to the language of Scripture, which speaks of the Gifts not as gifts, but as spirits: the "Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and fortitude," etc. By the use of these terms, Holy Writ gives us to understand that the aim and end of these Gifts, coming as they do from without and being poured into our soul with sanctifying grace, is to render our faculties supple to grace, and to dispose them to obey promptly the Divine inspirations. Now the meaning of inspiration is a motion from without in contradistinction to a motion produced under the influence of reason from within.

There is in man a twofold principle of activity which moves him to the performance of such acts as will lead him, under grace, to salvation. The first of these motions is interior, viz., reason; the second is exterior—God. Two kinds of perfections are necessary to fit man for the reception of this twofold motion: the more lowly of these two is the infused virtues, the purpose of which is to dispose man to follow without resistance the guidance of right reason in all his interior and exterior actions; the nobler kind, and, consequently, absolutely distinct from the preceding one, is the Gifts, the purpose of which is to render man's faculties flexible and receptive beneath the inspirations of the Holy Ghost.

Let us set this forth more plainly. First, it is evident that man possesses in his reason alone, whether it be left to its own power or enlightened by faith, a principle of activity under the influence of which he is moved or determined to this or that action. Since he is an intelligent and free agent, and, therefore, master of his own actions, he can in his own sphere determine himself of

his own free choice to this or that operation. However, in order that those human faculties, capable of eliciting moral acts, be habitually inclined towards good and disposed to accomplish it with facility, promptness and perseverance, they need to be perfected by certain qualities or habits, the purpose of which is to bring these faculties under the government of right reason. For acts in the natural order, this function belongs to the human or acquired virtues; for acts in the supernatural order, to the Christian or infused virtues. When man is equipped in this manner, he is in a position to act, to do good, to accomplish things that merit and are conducive to salvation, at least those which do not surpass the common and ordinary level of Christian virtue.

But when there is question of salvation, reason is not the sole motive-force nor the single determining principle of our actions; it is merely a subordinate and secondary one. The first and principal mover towards eternal life is outside of us, and it is no other than God. Now it is a truth warranted by everyday experience, that the higher the motive-force, the more perfect must be the dispositions which are to dispose the subject to receive its action. Thus, whilst a child is easily and quickly able to understand and follow the lessons of a teacher of elementary grammar, a long period of study —which is not even within the reach of some matured intelligences—is necessary to fit a cultured adult to follow the courses of a professor of higher education.

If then, our appetitive faculties are in need of a whole set of habits, acquired or infused accordingly as the good we seek to perform is natural or supernatural, to dispose them to obey promptly the injunctions of reason enlightened by its own light or by that of faith, how can we but conclude with St. Thomas, that to place us in condition to receive with fruit and follow with docility the inspirations and direction of the Holy Ghost—a

mover so far above our reason even when habitually enlightened by faith—other perfections, other habits superior to the moral virtues, acquired or infused, are absolutely indispensable. These perfections are the Gifts of the Holy Ghost. The infused moral virtues dispose the appetitive faculties to obey reason promptly; the Gifts make man docile to the inspirations of the Holy Spirit.

II

Let us allow St. Thomas to explain, in his usual clear way, what is to be understood by the human mode of action characteristic of the virtues, and what constitutes the superhuman, or, so to speak, Divine mode characteristic of the Gifts. The Angelic Doctor finds no way of bringing this out better than by comparing the virtue of faith with its parallel, the Gift of understanding; and he shows by an example, which he himself declares evident, the difference in their workings. The natural mode by which we know spiritual and Divine things, he says, consists in raising ourselves above this material visible world to the invisible world through the mirror of creatures and by means of analogies, *i. e.*, by means of concepts borrowed from the sensible order of things, and, therefore, necessarily imperfect; and this is why faith, which is an infused virtue, has recourse to these very same sensible notions in order to initiate us into the knowledge of supernatural truths.[4] He continues: faith broadens the circle of our concepts, enables us to penetrate into the very sanctuary of the Divinity, and reveals to us certain mysteries to the knowledge of which we would never have attained through viewing the spectacle of the universe around us; it does not, however, change our natural mode of knowing, and this is why faith is essentially obscure. Then comes the

[4] St. Thomas, III., *Sent.*, dist. XXXIV., q. i., a. 1.

Gift of Understanding, and instead of that mere assent to revealed dogmas which faith implies, it communicates to us a more certain perception of the truth, makes us see clearly into Divine things, lifts us above our natural mode of knowing, and without brushing aside all veils, gives us, even in this life, a foretaste of the future manifestations of heaven.

What a deep understanding of the truths of our faith do we not meet with from time to time in some men, yea, even in little children, uncultured and uneducated, yet docile to the inspirations of the Holy Spirit! What perspicacity, too, in detecting the poison of error! Perhaps, they are incapable of refuting by the methods of logic the sophisms of heresy and unbelief; yet they are so intimately penetrated with the truth of Catholic teaching, and they clearly understand how they must not stray from it in the least degree. How account for such a certitude about the things of faith? Is it due to natural means of knowledge at man's disposition—study, reflection, etc.? Certainly not; it is due to the Divine Gift of Understanding.

III

If now, passing to practice, we ask the Angelic Doctor in what consists the human mode of action proper to the virtues as distinguished from the Gifts. In what does prudence, for example, differ from the superhuman mode of mental activity characteristic of the corresponding Gift of Counsel. His answer is clear and precise. Let it be question of the choice of a state of life or of any other important determination one must take, this is how prudence proceeds. It first inquires into the means available to reach the end in view, determines those which are the best, and prescribes their application, examining all things with the light of reason, as well as with that of faith, weighing the pros and cons,

studying one's own qualifications, tendencies and dispositions, foreseeing what may happen in the future by judging from what has taken place under similar circumstances in the past, seeking the advice of prudent men, praying for Divine guidance. "The soul is acting wisely, but after a human fashion, finding things out by inquiry and conjecture," etc.[5] Then comes the determining of the better means, and finally the decision itself, which is the principal act of the virtue of prudence.

It happens not unfrequently, however, that on account of exceptional or particularly difficult circumstances, human prudence is found to be insufficient. It is in vain that we reflect, seek advice and study the question from every angle, we cannot succeed in clarifying matters, nor in taking any kind of a firm and precise resolution. What is one to do in such conjunctures, when prudence is silenced and reason baffled? We must follow the example of the holy King Josaphat, who, face to face with the combined army of the Ammonites, Moabites and Syrians, and knowing not what course to take, turned his eyes towards Heaven and addressed to God this prayer: "O our God, we have not strength enough to be able to resist this multitude, which cometh violently upon us. But as we know not what to do, we can only turn our eyes to Thee." [6] And behold the Spirit of the Lord came of a sudden upon a prophet, who went to the king and to his people with this message from Jehovah: "Fear ye not, and be ye not dismayed at this multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God's. . . . It shall not be you that shall fight." [7]

If, then, a Christian, in similar circumstances, has recourse to Him Who never refuses His help for things necessary or useful to salvation, and thereupon receives an impression from on high—call it an inspiration—

[5] St. Thomas, III., *Sent.*, dist. XXXIV., q. i., a. 2.
[6] 2 Paralipomenon xx. 12. [7] *Ibid.*, xv., 15-17.

which puts an end to all his perplexities, and thus is possessed with a kind of certitude pointing out what he must do—this is what is above the human mode, this is the effect of the Gift of Counsel.[8]

In things which do not surpass the reach of reason, it is acquired or infused prudence which is to direct man in the choice and use of means. Therefore, to neglect to examine with the light of one's own reason what it is best to say or to do in all grave matters, with the pretext that we abandon ourselves to Divine Providence, is tempting God. However, because human reason alone is incapable of understanding every particular case and all the circumstances that may arise: "For the thoughts of mortal man are fearful, and our counsels uncertain," [9] therefore in cases touching salvation, where prudence no longer suffices man needs to be guided and directed by Him Who knows all things. Just as in human affairs, when one lacks sufficient information in some affair, one has recourse to persons who are more expert.

This superior order of guidance in high spiritual affairs is obtained through the intermediary of the Gift of Counsel; hence the words of the Psalmist: "The Lord ruleth me, and I shall lack for nothing." [10] In this case, then, man has not to examine, nor to decide on the best line of conduct. The Holy Ghost takes over this task, and man has only to listen with docility to His inspirations, for, as St. Thomas says, it is the mover and not the instrument who judges and commands. Now when it is question of the need and the use of the Gifts, it is the Holy Ghost and not human reason who is the mover, the latter being passive rather than active, the instrument, and not the principal cause. Nevertheless, man is not to be looked upon as an utterly passive instru-

[8] St. Thomas, III., *Sent.*, dist. XXXIV., q. 1., a. 2.

[9] Sap. ix. 14.

[10] Psalm xxii. 1.

ment, for he has a certain activity, and he is free. He is active in so far as he is free and freely coöperates with the Divine motion.

The difference in mode of action, which we have just pointed out, between the virtue of prudence and the gift of counsel, is to be found also between the other virtues and the other Gifts. To each virtue corresponds a special Gift, the purpose of which is to perfect this virtue by helping it to operate under certain circumstances in a superhuman way. This is what notably takes place in the relation of the virtue of fortitude to the Gift which bears the same name.

The peculiar quality of the virtue of fortitude is to strengthen the soul by helping it to overcome, in spite of all dangers, yea, even of death itself, all the obstacles that are to be met with in the performance of good works. And if you ask what is its particular mode of action as a virtue, we answer you with St. Thomas, that it consists in facing and overcoming difficulties within reach of the human powers. To go beyond this point and undertake of one's own accord, works which exceed one's natural strength, would no longer be virtue, but rashness, just as it would be a sign of pusillanimity to shrink from the task through lack of courage. However, that man under some special circumstances and urged on by a higher instinct, should take as the measure of his acts, not his own resources, but the power of God; that he should direct his native energies to the performance of actions which exceed them and should face dangers which he has not the power to overcome, placing his entire confidence in God's help—this is what is above the human mode of action; and when it is done, it is the effect of the Gift of Fortitude.

It would be easy to push this comparison, and to show in detail what is the human mode of action proper to other virtues, and in what it differs from the mode of

action special to the Gifts. Perhaps, it will be better, however, if we limit ourselves merely to pointing out in a general way, what constitutes the divergence of procedure between these two influences.

In the performance of actions which emanate from the virtues, whether naturally acquired or due to infused grace, man acts in accordance with his human condition, *i. e.*, of his own accord and by his own initiative. After mature reflection, and, if need be, after seeking another's advice, he directs his energies to the performance of some particular good action of his own free choice and determination—which does not mean, of course, that God's ordinary motion, which acts as primary cause in every free or natural agent, is excluded. If, on the other hand, man acts under the influence of the Gifts, he is no longer acting of his own accord, but an interior and omnipotent impulse (with which, however, he freely coöperates), urges him to do this or that thing which has been suddenly suggested to him. In this case, man is rather passive than active, although his personal activity, in the form of free consent and free coöperation, is not absent, for God moves each being in a manner conformable to its nature.

St. Augustine, commenting upon the words of the Apostle, "Whosoever are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God," [11] has given us an excellent description of this second mode of action. He bids us observe that the Holy Ghost "moves them so as to make them act—and not to remain simply passive and inert." [12] Hence, they do act; yet, to bring out the special impulse which causes them to act, St. Paul says they are moved by the Spirit of God. Now "to be moved or set in action, is more than simply to be conducted or guided; for though he who is guided does something, and that correctly just because he is guided,

[11] Romans viii. 14. [12] St. Augustine, *De corrept. et grat.*, c. ii., n. 4.

yet he who is moved or set acting, seems scarcely to do anything of himself; and meantime the grace of the Saviour acts so efficaciously on our will that the Apostle fears not to say that those who 'are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.' And our will can make no better use of its liberty than to abandon it to the impulse of Him Who can do no wrong." [13]

Holy Scripture and the lives of the Saints abound in passages, where we read of men acting under the influence of this Divine impulse. Thus it is said in the Gospel according to St. Luke that Jesus "was driven by the Spirit into the desert." [14] In the same way, the holy man, Simeon, who had received from the Holy Ghost the promise that he should not die before seeing Christ the Lord, "came in the Spirit into the temple," [15] at the very moment when Mary and Joseph presented themselves in the Temple to fulfill the prescriptions of the Law in the person of the Child Jesus.

An incident which will show us in a striking way the difference in mode of action between the virtues and the Gifts is the following: Under the persecution of Septimius Severus, a young slave woman, named Felicitas, was condemned to the wild beasts with several other Christians. She was about to give birth to a child, and as the day fixed for her death was fast approaching, Felicitas was deeply grieved at the thought that her present condition would be the cause of delaying her execution, since the law forbade the execution of a woman with child. The other martyrs who were imprisoned with her shared in her grief, and were unwilling to leave her behind. Three days before the date fixed for their appearance in the amphitheatre, all began to pray to obtain Felicitas' immediate delivery of her child. They had barely ceased when she was seized with the

[13] St. Augustine, *De Gestis Pelag.*, c. iii., n. 5.

[14] Luke iv. 1. [15] Luke ii. 27.

pains of childbirth, and, as she was uttering groans. one of the jailors said to her: "If you cannot bear with this suffering now, what will become of you when you will be torn by the wild beasts? You would have done much better by sacrificing to the gods." To this the noble woman answered: "Today it is I who suffer; tomorrow Another will suffer in me for me, because I also suffer for Him."

IV

The Gifts of the Holy Ghost are distinct from the virtues not only by their mode of action, but also by the rule which measures their acts.

The rule governing the acquired natural virtues is human reason perfected by natural prudence; that governing the same virtues when infused, is reason enlightened by faith and directed by supernatural prudence. As to the Gifts of the Holy Ghost—those higher perfections which God communicates to us in view of the special impulse and motion He is to bestow on us—their acts have no other rule or measure than the Divine inspiration, and the wisdom of Him Who is the Spirit of Truth.

And be it remembered that it is not only on rare occasions that the Divine inspiration moves man to the performance of works which transcend the ordinary bounds of reason, even of reason enlightened by faith. These works possess a superior goodness; they are not performed with rashness, since they have God as their counselor and mainstay; and their performance is justifiable for the very superior condition that God, in acting in this way, is not bound to restrict Himself within the narrow limits of human reason, even sanctified by grace of an ordinary kind. Works done under the spell of a Gift of the Holy Spirit go beyond what the rules of prudence would exact. Ordinary, and even Christian, prudence would not authorize any one to undertake

them or advise them. But it is particularly in these works that the Gifts of the Holy Ghost come into action.

When St. Dorothea, on her way to martyrdom, was addressed by a lawyer named Theophilus, who, having heard her speak of the paradise of her Spouse, said to her scoffingly: "Very well, spouse of Christ, send me from the paradise of your Spouse some flowers." She answered promptly: "Certainly, I will." We might ask whence came such an assurance? Would she have spoken in this way had she followed the laws of Christian prudence? Was she not exposing herself either to tempt God in expecting a miracle He was not at all bound to perform, or to throw discredit on the Christian religion should the promise never be realized? And yet the young girl answers without the slightest hesitation: "Certainly, I will." And the event justified her promise. We can explain it only by saying that it was the Holy Ghost who suggested this answer, and that she had obeyed with docility and without hesitation or reflection the Divine inspiration according to the words of the prophet: "The Lord hath opened my ear, and I do not resist." [16]

In the same way when the blessed Henry Suso, of the Order of St. Dominic, traced in deep characters the name of Jesus on his breast, and macerated his body in a way revolting to our self-indulgence. Again, when St. Apollonia, threatened by the pagans with being burnt alive if she did not renounce Christ Jesus, forestalled their plans and cast herself into the flames, when the Stylites, and so many other saints embraced a state of life, which seemed to be a perpetual challenge to nature, can we say that they acted according to the rules of Christian prudence? Certainly not; yet countless miracles attest their holiness, proving that in acting in this manner they were obeying a Divine impulse. All those

[16] Isaias 1. 5.

heroisms of faith, meekness, fortitude, patience and charity, so plentiful in the lives of the Saints; all those extraordinary works undertaken for the glory of God and the salvation of our neighbor—the highest manifestations of the spiritual life—are nothing else than effects of the Gifts of the Holy Ghost. Emanating as they do from a principle superior to that of even the infused virtues, why should we wonder that they so far surpass the latter in brilliancy and edification?

This is the reason why some theologians claim that the Gifts are perfections which dispose men to acts which are of more noble degree, and are more excellent than are usually the acts of the virtues. Far from disapproving of this opinion, St. Thomas declares that it is the one which seems to him the most in conformity with truth.

But do we mean to infer that the Gifts have a purpose distinct from that of the virtues, and that they function *only* in the case of heroic or extraordinary actions? If this were the case, the Gifts would be given only to great saints, as the Apostles, martyrs and other generous souls, ever anxious to meet any sacrifice that will advance them in the way of perfection. The Gifts would be of little use to the immense majority of Christians, who lead virtuous lives without ever performing any remarkable actions. How many persons there are who are saved simply by keeping the commandments and performing the ordinary duties of a Christian life! Of what use, then, are the Gifts, if they enter into play, but rarely and in exceptional cases? But it is the universal teaching of the Doctors, and of the masters of the spiritual life, that the Gifts of the Holy Ghost are the heritage common to all the just, not excepting even the lowest of God's servants; and St. Thomas teaches further that they are necessary for salvation. Acts of heroism and of the more eminent works of holiness do not con-

stitute the principal field of action of the Gifts of the Holy Ghost, and cannot be considered the principal object and the ordinary field of their influence. Hence, whilst St. Thomas concedes that "the Gifts do surpass the ordinary perfection of the virtues," yet he would have us note that this is not to be understood as a distinction as to the kind of works done—as, for example, the counsels are higher than the precepts—but of the *mode* of action of the Gifts, inasmuch as they dispose man to receive the impulse of a superior agent.[17]

It is impossible, therefore, without straying from the teaching of the prince of theologians, to assign to the virtues and to the Gifts, *fields* of action completely distinct one from the other, reserving to the latter special works surpassing in perfection the aim and object of the former. On the contrary, there is no virtuous activity upon which one or other of the Gifts may not exert its superior *mode* of activity. As, indeed, there are no human forces or faculties capable of becoming the principle of human acts which are not susceptible of being actuated by the Holy Ghost and perfected by His Gifts. In a word, the field of action of the Gifts and of the virtues is coterminous; both have the same object in view, but they differ from one another by their mode of action and by the rule which governs their action; and it is in this respect that they are not the same.

V

To summarize, we can now clearly perceive the respective functions in the supernatural life, of the virtues and the Gifts. According to the Angelic Doctor, the function of the virtues is to fit our appetitive faculties to follow promptly the dictates of right reason, while that of the Gifts is to dispose the just soul to follow with docility the inspirations of the Holy Ghost.[18]

[17] St. Thomas, I., I., q. lxviii., a. 2, ad 1.

[18] St. Thomas, I., II., q. lxviii., a. 3.

The Angelic Doctor holds that by the very fact that a man is well disposed to follow sound reason, he is equally well disposed to follow God's inspirations. As to the Gifts, their function is to prepare him who possesses them to receive in a very intimate and connatural way, not any kind of Divine impulse, but certain special impulses, known as inspirations or instincts of the Holy Spirit, and to help man to elicit actions which extend beyond his ordinary scope, if not by their object, at least by their particular mode of production and by the norm or standard which governs them.

In order to set forth this truth in its fullest light, it will not be out of place here to remind ourselves that there is a threefold Divine motion or impulse. The first is the motion proportioned to nature, and given in view of natural operations; this is the motion by which God operates in every free agent, as its first cause; its necessity is proved by St. Thomas in his *Summa Theologica.*[19]

The second is the motion of the supernatural order and proportioned by grace; it is communicated to us by God to help us perform actions that will lead us to salvation. For, however perfect one might suppose a creature to be, even were it to possess sanctifying grace and the infused virtues to a high degree, it is incapable of passing from potency to act without the help of a Divine motion. But in the present case this motion is distinct from actual grace, namely, that which moves one to this or that particular act.

The third motion bears a very special character, and under its influence man is rather passive than active, according to the words of the Apostle: "Whosoever are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." [20] With reference to this text, St. Thomas remarks, that to be "led by the Spirit of God is to be set in movement by

[19] I., q. cv., a. 5. [20] Romans viii. 14.

a certain superior instinct. This is why it is said of animals, not that they act, as if they were moved of their own free movement, but that they are impelled by instinct. Something similar to this takes place in the spiritual man who is disposed towards certain actions, not primarily by the movement of his own free will, but by the Holy Ghost." [21]

Fearing that some would misuse this comparison, the Angelic Doctor hastens to add, that this motion of the Holy Ghost does not at all exclude spontaneity in the souls of the just, nay, even the liberty of their actions, but that it simply indicates that the free movement of their will itself and their free choice is caused by the Holy Spirit, according to the Apostle's saying: "It is God Who worketh in you both to will and to accomplish, according to His good will." [22]

The first kind of Divine motion moves our natural forces, when acting alone or perfected by the acquired virtues; and it becomes with them the principle of morally good acts. The second Divine motion sets to work the infused virtues, and leads us to perform supernatural acts, at least those in which our natural mode of action is still preserved. The third motion is characteristic of the Gifts alone, and is always a special impulse, the terminus of which is a work supereminent in some way or other, one of those works in which the human soul acts as the instrument of the Holy Ghost, and, hence, is itself rather passive than active.

In the first two, the Divine motion conceals itself, as it were, behind our faculties, urging them on to action, while respecting their normal natural play; in the happy expression of Pope Pius VI. in the Bull, *Auctorem fidei*, it induces us to perform actions we freely determine to perform; the Divine influence "works that we may

[21] St. Thomas, in Romans viii., 14, lect. 3.
[22] Philippians ii. 13.

work." This is the common and ordinary motion under the influence of which are performed acts emanating from the virtues.

Very different is the motion characteristic of the Gifts. As a matter of fact, the latter anticipates our deliberations, forestalls our judgments, and leads us in a kind of instinctive way to perform works of which we had not dreamt, and which we are justified in calling superhuman, whether because they exceed our natural powers, or because they are accomplished outside the ordinary modes and procedures of nature and of ordinary grace. This motion is an impulse coming from God as from a superior agent, which, to be well received, demands certain very special dispositions on the part of the soul.

It is certainly evident that in order to dispose the soul to obey promptly these extraordinary impulses—by which the Holy Spirit leads men to perform actions which belong principally to His own intimate dominion and are produced apart from the ordinary rules—certain special perfections superior to those of the virtues (in other words, the Gifts), are absolutely indispensable. For must not the soul thus extraordinarily moved be harmoniously related to its mover? On the other hand, when it is question of common, ordinary good works which man can perform by his own resources, whether natural or ordinary graces, we can readily see with St. Thomas, that the same influence which disposes the will to follow the impulse of right reason, disposes it also to receive the ordinary motion of Divine grace. The natural virtue of fortitude or of temperance, for example, which bends our will to the yoke of right reason, renders this same will docile to that Divine motion which God imparts for strengthening natural virtue.

This is why it is true that not only the soul who possesses the Gifts of the Holy Ghost, but even the sinner,

i. e., one who having lost charity has preserved the virtues of faith and hope—can perform acts of the natural virtues when he wills to do so, and be helped by ordinary grace, even in the absence of the Gifts.

Let us conclude that God moves us both by the virtues and by the Gifts, although in diverse ways: in a way conformable to our nature by the virtues, in a superior manner by the Gifts. As long as it is question of doing good conformably to the ordinary activities of nature and grace, the help of the Gifts is not necessary; and the virtues suffice—namely, the acquired virtues—for good works of the natural order; but the Christian or infused virtues are needed for actions meritorious of salvation. And it is only in circumstances in which man must act in a superior way; when he finds himself in particularly difficult situations; when he must practise virtue in something like an heroic degree; when he must correspond freely, and yet with docility, with one or other of those unusual impulses God sometimes gives —it is only in such cases that the Gifts become indispensable.

VI

If such is the rôle of these Gifts, if their proper and special end is to prepare us to follow submissively the Divine inspiration—the particular and extraordinary impulses of the Holy Spirit in the things in which the guide of reason is insufficient—why claim that they are necessary for salvation? Why affirm that the faithful, who are usually satisfied with the practice of ordinary virtue, need these gifts, to attain their end? It would seem that, with the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity, which make them well disposed with regard to Divine things, and with the infused moral virtues, which produce a like effect in regard to human duties and relationships, they possess all that is required to

attain salvation. They know the term towards which they ought to direct their life, they have the supernatural powers to tend to it; what more is necessary? We answer that it is necessary to have a *special* motion and direction of Him of Whom the Psalmist speaks when he says: "Thy good Spirit shall lead me into the right land." [23] No one can come to the celestial inheritance except he be directed and led thither directly by the Holy Ghost.[24]

If man had no other end save that which answers to the needs of his nature he would be able with his native energies and the ordinary helps, which Providence never refuses, to proceed of himself to the term of his destiny, as far as it is no more than merely human.

But because God has called us to an end which absolutely surpasses the powers and the needs of nature, and that reason itself even perfected by faith and the other theological virtues, is incapable of leading us to this blessed term, He grants us a direction more lightsome, an assistance more powerful, namely, the Divine Gifts, whose end is precisely to render us supple and docile to inspirations from on high. This is a mark and an effect of His truly overflowing goodness, is granted quite gratuitously, and is in a certain sense wholly above what is strictly necessary. But whence arises that lack of docility to the inspirations from on high. It arises from the imperfect possession of the theological virtues, which is characteristic of the state of men journeying to eternity; and also of the insufficiency of the moral virtues to resist in every occurrence the onsets of the devil, the world and the flesh, which are at times so sudden and so vehement.

St. Thomas remarks, that whosoever possesses *perfectly* a nature, a form, a virtue, in short, any principle of operation, can, with the ordinary motion of God

[23] Psalm cxlii. 10. [24] St. Thomas, I., II., q. xlviii., a. 2.

(Who works interiorly in every free agent), act by himself in that sphere; but he who possesses only *imperfectly* a fountain of activity, does not find resources in himself to act adequately, but has need of an external help, of a direction, and of a special motion. Thus with the medical student who is an interne in the hospital, who is not yet fully instructed; if he be prudent, he does not risk undertaking alone and without the assistance of his preceptor an operation that is delicate and fraught with serious consequences; while an experienced surgeon, being well versed in his profession, can operate by himself, having no need of direction. A ship captain, voyaging in unknown seas, does not risk entering a port difficult of access, but he hires the services of an experienced pilot.

Now such is precisely the actual condition of a just man in reference to his ultimate supernatural end. Possessing only imperfectly the principles of supernatural operations, that is to say the Christian virtues and particularly the three theological virtues—since we know and love God only imperfectly—therefore, he is powerless to arrive at the port of salvation without a special help, that is to say without a particular impulse and assistance of the Holy Ghost. And since that Divine impulse is necessary, necessary also in consequence are the Gifts of the Holy Ghost which dispose us to receive it.

We do not mean that man whilst in the order of grace is incapable of acting efficaciously of himself and of his own initiative in all circumstances. In so far as he is informed by the theological virtues—although in an imperfect way—he can accomplish, with the ordinary help of grace, some meritorious acts; and he can begin to advance and push forward toward the eternal shores. But because he is powerless either to know all that it is important to know, or to accomplish all that it will be useful or necessary to do; and because, also,

he has not the possession of the acquired or the infused virtues in sufficient volume to furnish remedy against the ignorance, the stupidity, the hardness of heart and the other miseries of our nature—for all these reasons he is unequal to the task of overcoming all the difficulties which may present themselves and to proceed securely to heaven, without a special assistance, and, therefore, without the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.

How many times in the course of his life, does a Christian find himself in the presence of certain serious crises, of important resolutions to be taken (even of a choice of a state of life to be made), of adopting a line of conduct to be followed in such or such grave circumstances, in a word in need of knowing exactly what is expedient for his eternity! It is, therefore, necessary that we be now and again *specially* directed and protected by Him Who knows all, Who can direct all.

Salvation demands at times works that are equal to perfection. Often it is a government official who cannot fulfill his religious duties without being on bad terms with his superiors and exposing himself to fall into their disfavor. If he were a single man he could confront the danger more courageously; but he has a family, and his position is his only means of their support. Or it is a case of married persons, who, in order not to float adrift and be carried along by the stream of evil tendency, as happens to so many others, need heroic energy to remain faithful to the grave duties marriage imposes upon them. Even were we to suppose that these Christians possess with grace, the former the virtue of fortitude, the latter conjugal chastity, yet frequently their motive would be weak and their fortitude wavering. Whence shall come the *special* help, the immense increase of energy necessary in such critical circumstances, if not in unceasing prayer and the Gifts of the Holy Ghost? The Gift of Fortitude is to perfect

the natural virtue which bears its name, and the Gift of Fear will be a very fitting help to conjugal chastity by inspiring married persons with a holy horror of sin. This is why St. Thomas remarks, with St. Gregory the Great, that the purpose of the Gifts is to assist the virtues.

Although inferior in quality to the theological virtues —which unite us to God directly—the Gifts lend them a necessary coöperation: they enliven our faith, hearten our hope, inflame our charity, give us the savor of God and of Divine things. But, above all, they are the precious auxiliaries of the natural and moral virtues, whose action they perfect, supplying, when need be, for their inadequacy. Prudence receives from the Gift of Counsel indispensable lights for its guidance; Justice gains strength to render to each one his due; the soul often is perfected by the Gift of Piety, which inspires us with sentiments of filial tenderness towards God and bowels of mercy towards our brethren. The Gift of Fortitude, as already said, makes us surmount bravely all the obstacles which deter us from good, strengthens us against the dread of difficulties, and inspires us with the necessary courage to undertake the more formidable kind of tasks. In fine, the Gift of Fear strengthens the virtue of temperance against the rude assaults of the rebellious flesh. A more energetic action, more heroic efforts in the practice of virtue—such are the effects of the Gifts of the Holy Ghost. By them the soul easily mounts to much greater heights of perfection, the infused virtues having placed it already in the possession of ordinary holiness, and rendered it capable of accomplishing the ordinary works of the Christian life.[25] The masters of the spiritual life have compared the Gifts to the wings of a bird, and again to the sails of a ship; the bird flies much more swiftly than it walks; and

[25] St. Thomas, "*De Charit.*," q. unic., a. 2, ad 17.

while the boat equipped only with simple oars advances with much labor and slowly, one whose sails are swelled with the wind is fleet upon the waves.

It appears clearly evident that the Gifts of the Holy Ghost are truly necessary, wherever the action of our native reason, though it be helped by the infused virtues, is yet insufficient; and that, therefore, a special Divine impulse becomes imperative. Even with the assistance of the Christian infused virtues, human reason is incapable of *surely* leading us to our last end, and of enabling us to surmount *all* the obstacles encountered upon the way, if it is not roused and aided by a particular inspiration from on high, a kind of superior instinct of the Holy Ghost, namely His Gifts.

We have need of that special Divine impulse, and consequently of the Gifts, not indeed constantly, but from time to time, in the course of our life, more or less frequently according to the difficulties which present themselves, or when lofty acts of virtue must be accomplished, a high degree of perfection achieved, according to the good pleasure of the Master of these Gifts Who dispenses them as He pleases. There is no period of life, no state, no human condition that can dispense with the Gifts and their Divine influence.

They are not, however, necessary for each and every one of the supernatural acts, but only for the works emanating from a just soul under the special influence of the Holy Ghost. "Under the influence of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, the human mind is not so much moving as it is being moved." [26]

[26] St. Thomas, II., II., q. lii., a. 2, ad. 1.

CHAPTER VII

Final Effects of the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The Fruits of the Holy Spirit and the Beatitudes.

We now understand, if not in every detail, at least in a sort of symposium, how the Holy Ghost acts upon the souls of the just. It is a magnificent and complex organism of holiness, which a Father of the Church describes as making of men a living instrument of music admirably suited to sound forth the Divine glory and the Divine power. Having prepared all things in order, as a consummate artist, the Holy Spirit seats Himself at the keyboard of this spiritual instrument. Provided that He meets with no opposition, He elicits from it exquisite chords which delight the heart of God, and attract the world's unwilling attention.

At one time it is the sweet and chaste Agnes, with full hearted ease beginning here on earth to intone the canticle of virgins, which she shall continue through eternity in heaven: "I love Christ, into Whose nuptials I shall enter, Whose mother is a virgin, Whose father knew not woman. . . . I am espoused to Him Whom the angels serve, Whose beauty the sun and the moon admire." At another, it is Ignatius the martyr, about to be exposed in the amphitheatre to wild beasts. Hearing the roarings of the lions, in his longing for suffering he cried, "I am the wheat of Christ, and I must be ground by the teeth of beasts, that I may become truly pure bread." At another time, it is the great Apostle, Paul, hurling at his enemies this defiant challenge:

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation? or distress? or famine? or nakedness? or dangers? or persecution? or the sword? . . . For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor might, nor height, nor depth, nor any creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus Our Lord." [1]

Again it is the countless multitude of saints and holy souls scattered throughout the entire world, a grand concert indeed, where each plays his own part and extols in a particular strain the triumph of grace over nature: a ravishing symphony, too, where all voices blend and marvelously harmonize. It is the voice of children and old men, of maidens and youths, of men and of women, ascending from earth to heaven; the voice of innocence never lost or of righteousness regained. Now it is the voice of merciful charity appealing through the lips of Vincent de Paul to the entire race to come to the aid of every form of wretchedness. Now the voice of faith triumphing in the person of Peter of Verona, who, struck down by heretics and on the point of death, yet finds strength enough to trace upon the ground with the purple of his blood this sublime word: *Credo,* I believe. Now the voice of humility in John of the Cross, in words more beautiful and more heroic than human lips can utter unaided by grace. For, on being asked by Christ what recompense he desired for his great labors, his only reply was: "Lord, to suffer and to be despised for Thy sake."

What admirable flowers of virtue the breath of the Holy Spirit causes to bloom in souls docile to His action! Or rather how delicious and how varied are the fruits He produces there! It is of these souls Our Lord speaks when He says to His Apostles: "I have

[1] Romans viii. 35-39.

chosen you; and have appointed you that you should go and should bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain."[2] The just soul is compared in Holy Writ to a tree planted on the bank of a stream, bringing forth its fruit in due season.[3]

What are these Fruits? The Apostle, St. Paul, enumerates them for us beautifully, in the fifth chapter of the Epistle to the Galatians: "But the fruit of the Spirit is charity, joy, peace, patience, benignity, goodness, longanimity, mildness, faith, modesty, continency, chastity."[4] What are we to understand by these Fruits of the Holy Ghost? Why are they so named? How do they differ from the virtues and the Gifts? What of their number?

I

In the first place, what is meant by the Fruits of the Holy Ghost? By them are meant, says St. Thomas, all the acts of virtue which have reached a *certain* degree of perfection and in which man finds his delight.[5] We call them Fruits, says St. Ambrose, because they feed the soul with pure and holy joy.

Taken in its very natural signification, "fruit" designates the final, nourishing product of a plant or of a tree come to the perfection of its kind. It is the term or purpose of vegetation, the definite result of the wonderfully intricate processes of growth in plant life. Fruits are as varied as are the trees from which they are gathered; however, they have this in common, that they are the final product of the plant, each one when fully ripened having a certain specific and peculiar savor. Though they are pleasing to the eye by reason of their lustre and the splendor of their color, and though the sweetness and delicacy of their fragrance

[2] John xv. 16. [3] Psalm i. 3. [4] Galatians v. 22, 23.

makes them delightful to the smell, yet neither foliage nor flowers can be called fruits, for they are not the final product of the tree.

The fruit is not only the ornament and the perfection of the tree, it is the very reason of its existence, its purpose and its end. It is this which gives to the tree its value, which adequately compensates for the care bestowed upon its cultivation. This is why Our Saviour, in the parable of the fig tree, which had not produced fruit for several years, says: "Therefore cut it down; wherefore doth it cumber the earth?" [6]

A good lesson is this for the Christian, that under pain of being lopped off as a worthless branch and thrown into the fire, he should not leave inactive the Divine energies conferred upon him. For these are as so many germs destined to shoot forth and to blossom beneath the breath of the Spirit of God, and to produce those works worthy of life eternal called in Holy Writ the fruits of the Holy Ghost. It is by analogy, that in the spiritual order the final products of grace in the soul are called Fruits. This name is given, if not to all acts of virtue indiscriminately, at least to those acts which have a higher degree of perfection.

The Fruits of the Holy Ghost are not then habits, or permanent qualities, but distinct acts. They are not to be compared with the infused virtues and to the Gifts, but are to be distinguished from them as the effect is distinguished from its cause, and as the stream from its fountain. And although St. Paul has enumerated among these Fruits charity, patience, etc., yet these expressions are not to be understood as those very high qualities themselves, but rather as their operations; for however perfect they might be, they should not be considered as the last and most perfect product of grace.

However, to merit the name of fruits, a certain savor

[6] Luke xiii. 7.

and fragrance must accompany these acts. At the start, acts are not performed except with something like pain; they demand effort, and some even are repugnant to nature and taste like unripe fruit. But, as a pious author observes, "when a person exercises himself for a long time in the fervent practice of virtues, he acquires facility in producing their acts. He no longer feels the repugnance he experienced at the outset, nor has he to combat any longer, or to do himself violence. He does now with pleasure what had hitherto cost him pain. Then takes place in the virtues what takes place in the tree; for as the tree yields fruits sweet and agreeable to the taste once they have ripened, so when the acts of virtue are come to maturity and are, as it were, ripened, they are performed with pleasure and found to have a delicious relish." [7]

The world comprehends nothing of these delights. As St. Bernard says, it sees the cross, but not its unction. The anguish of the flesh, the mortification of the senses, the works of penance, these do not attract its attention, except painfully; and looking upon them all in horror, it misses the consolations of the Holy Spirit. Pious souls, on the contrary, gladly cry out with the spouse in the Canticle: "I sat down in the shade of Him Whom I have desired, and His fruit is sweet to my palate." [8]

How many Fruits of the Holy Ghost are there? As we have just seen, St. Paul counts twelve. Why twelve? It would seem that we should admit as many Fruits as there are acts of virtue. This is really the conclusion of St. Thomas: "The Fruits," he says, "are all the acts of virtue in which man finds delight." The Apostle then would have been able, had he so wished, to include in his enumeration a number much larger, but he had no purpose of stating them all. He stops at the number twelve because in the style of the sacred

[7] Lallemant, *Spiritual Doctrine.* [8] Canticles ii. 3.

writings this number designates universality; and also because all the acts of virtue can be assorted and summarized under the twelve mentioned by the Apostle, since they embrace the entire Christian life.

We have spoken of Fruits; we could just as well have called them flowers, if, in lieu of considering our good works as the final products of grace here below, we were to view them in the light of life eternal, or which they are the sign and the pledge. For as when the flower appears in its gorgeous array we cherish the hope in due season of plucking the fruit, so do we in the practice of holy and meritorious works, give promise of coming to life and beatitude eternal.

II

At the summit of the spiritual life, and consequently above the acts of ordinary virtue, and even above the Fruits of the Holy Spirit, we find the Beatitudes. These are the very crowning of the Divine work in us, the last and most sublime effect of the presence of Him Whom the Father has condescended to give us for our sanctification, and Who is Himself the foretaste of celestial happiness.

What are the Beatitudes? How many are they? Are they distinct from the Fruits, the virtues and the Gifts?

By the Beatitudes are meant certain acts of this present life which, because of their particular perfection, lead directly and surely to eternal happiness. Here the figure of metonymy is used, these acts being called Beatitudes because they are at once the pledge, the meritorious cause, and, to a certain extent, the foretaste of true and perfect beatitude.

Beatitude, properly so-called, is essentially one, and consists in the possession of God. It is clear that God is the Sovereign, infinite Good, alone capable of satisfying all desires—nor is anyone happy except in the

measure in which he possesses God. In this world, it is true, we possess Him by grace and but imperfectly; we bear Him within us, but He is dimmed to our perceptions; we love and enjoy Him, but always with the possibility of losing Him: "As to beatitude here below, plainly we can but mean a beatitude imperfect, hoped for, merited, and at best only begun." [9]

The Beatitudes mentioned in the Gospel and the subject of our present remarks, do not therefore designate absolute happiness, felicity properly so-called. Is it not manifest that poverty, tears, hunger and thirst (even after righteousness), suffering persecution for God's sake, is it not plain that these do not constitute true and perfect beatitude? And yet Our Lord affirms that they are the means, the stages, the ascents to absolute beatitude. They are means so powerful, so efficacious, so sure, that whosoever employs them perseveringly, can repeat after the Apostle "I am saved through hope." [10] Is it not said that a man has come to the term of his desires, when he has reached well grounded hopes of attaining them—constantly and regularly progressing towards their fulfillment, and especially when he is beginning to taste their sweetness? Therefore, when we behold a Christian docile to the inspirations of the Holy Ghost, advancing every day in the path of righteousness by acts of the virtues and of the Gifts, and gradually making those wonderful ascents, the blessedness of which the Psalmist speaks: "Blessed is the man whose help is from Thee, in his heart he hath disposed to ascend by steps in the vale of tears, in the place he hath set" [11]—when we behold such a one, how can we feel otherwise than confident that he will end his journey in the haven of eternal blessedness?

But just what are these means leading so surely to

[9] Monsignor Gay, *"Sermons d'Avent."* [10] Romans viii. 24.
[11] Psalm lxxxiii. 6.

eternal blessedness, what are the acts so full of sweetness that one may consider them the beginning of beatitude?

Our Saviour makes them known to us in the famous Sermon on the Mount, the prelude of His entire public life: "Blessed are those who love poverty and detachment of spirit from all transitory things; blessed are the meek and the kindly; the sorrowing and the afflicted; they who hunger and thirst after holiness; they who are merciful; they whose hearts are clean; they who are apostles of peace; they who suffer for justice' sake."[12] Eight times does He repeat the word "Blessed," no matter how varied the other parts of this Divine litany. So does He proclaim before an astounded world what Christian language has termed the Eight Beatitudes. Eight they are; let us repeat them: poverty of spirit, meekness, tears, hunger and thirst for righteousness, mercy, purity of heart, love of peace, suffering persecution for God's sake. The eighth is the confirmation and the exhibition of all the others. Indeed, at the very moment a man has poverty of spirit, meekness and the other virtues firmly rooted in his soul, persecution is powerless to tear him away from these celestial and eternal goods.

The Beatitudes are neither the virtues nor the Gifts of the Holy Ghost. They are the acts which are produced under the influence of these habits of grace. However, because of their excellence and perfection, the Beatitudes ought to be considered rather as a product of the Gifts, than as an emanation from the virtues. The virtue of poverty may well prompt one to that detachment which makes him use with moderation the goods of this world; but it is the Gift of Fear which inspires him with contempt for them. The virtue of meekness gives a man the necessary energy to check

[12] Matthew v.

the impetuosity of anger, and to keep it within the bounds of right reason; but it is the Gift of Piety that assures him absolute tranquillity of temper and serenity of soul, perfect self-possession and submission to God's will. "Blessed are they that mourn:" the virtue of temperance places a bridle on desire of earthly joys, and keeps them within just bounds; but it is the Gift of Knowledge that raises the soul much higher, making it see clearly the frailty, the vanity, and the transitory nature of these joys, leads it to reject them entirely even when lawful, if this is found to be God's will, and to embrace voluntarily grief and tears.

The Beatitudes, thus distinct from the virtues, are likewise distinct from the Fruits of the Holy Ghost. For although they produce joy as do the Fruits, they have furthermore the advantages of perfecting him who possesses them. They are Fruits, if you will; but of the more excellent kind, the more beautiful, more exquisite. The Beatitudes are Fruits which have received the finishing touches of the Divine Sun, kissed by it unto perfect maturity. They are Fruits in which are wondrously hidden such perfect sweetness as gives a foretaste of celestial felicity. And thus it is that the series of marvels, which the Holy Ghost accomplishes in the souls in which He has fixed His abode, is crowned by these perfect works, bright harbingers of beatitude and of the full possession of God in paradise.

III

Before closing this study, already quite lengthy, let us take a last brief survey of the truths upon which we have dwelt; just as before crossing the threshold of an edifice we have visited, and have examined in detail, we cast a glance at the whole to take in its most prominent features, to admire the harmonious arrangement of its parts, and fix it more firmly in our memory.

God is everywhere, in every being and in every place as the immediate cause of everything outside Himself. But He unites Himself and is present to the souls of the just in a very particular way, that is to say—as the object of their knowledge and love. It is not only by His image imprinted on the mind and by His memory, or by His favors bestowed that He is present to the justified. He comes to them veritably in Person, inaugurating here below that life of union and beatitude which is to be consummated in heaven. It is simply a matter of fact, that as soon as the sinner returns to the friendship of God, He Who is Subsistent personalized Love in God, *i. e.*, the Holy Ghost, is sent to seal, as it were, by His presence the covenant of reconciliation, to coöperate in the great work of sanctification, and to become in the just soul the active principle of a new life, a life incomparably superior to the life of man's nature. Nor does the Holy Spirit make merely a passing visit, precious as that might be; but He comes to establish Himself in the soul with the Father and the Son, and fixes His abode there, there to remain whilst the soul's love for God remains.

Entering into the soul, the Spirit of God gives Himself to it, and this is His great favor. Then begins the work of beautifying and adorning the living temple in which He is pleased to dwell. To this end He pours into it that grace of infinite value called sanctifying, the effect of which is to purify from every stain, to efface sin, to justify, to transform, yea, to deify the recipient, to make him a child of God and the object of His complacency, with a right to the celestial and eternal inheritance. Nor is this all; for grace never comes alone. Rather it is always accompanied by a whole throng of virtues and supereminent qualities, which are at once an adornment of our faculties and a source of their supernatural activity. These are the theological vir-

tues of Faith, Hope and Charity; furthermore, the infused moral virtues; and also the Gifts of the Holy Ghost; all of these being living germs of the Fruits God wishes to harvest in us; divine energies, the sources of those admirable acts called Beatitudes, because they are the meritorious cause and, as it were, a foretaste of the felicity we await in eternity.

Thus endowed, we are able to go forward, having need of naught else to steer our barque directly and surely towards the eternal shores, unless it be these impulses of the Holy Spirit, which are the constantly renewed portion of the children of God. Nor have we long to wait for these. From the depths of the soul where He dwells, that Divine Spirit enlightens our intelligence, inflames our heart, quickens us and incites us to good. Who will count all the holy thoughts He arouses in us, the good impulses He imparts, the salutary inspirations of which He is the source? Why is it that obstacles too frequently come to more or less paralyze His beneficent activity and to hinder His purposes? This is why so many Christians in the possession of habitual grace and of the Divine energies which accompany it, remain, nevertheless, so feeble and so sluggish in God's service, so little zealous for their perfection, so inclined to earth, so forgetful of the things of heaven, so easily fascinated by evil? This is why the Apostle exhorts us "to grieve not the Holy Spirit of God: whereby you are sealed unto the day of redemption," [13] and, above all, "to extinguish not the Spirit." [14]

There is another reason which finally explains why a seed so prolific of holiness produces oftentimes so sorry a harvest. It is this: that knowing but very imperfectly the treasure of which they are the guardians, a number of Christians form only a faint estimate of it, and put themselves to little pains to make it yield fruit.

[13] Ephesians iv. 30. [14] 1 Thessalonians v. 19.

Yet what power, what generosity, what respect for self, what watchfulness and what consolation and joy, would not this thought, if constantly held before the mind and piously meditated upon, inspire: *The Holy Ghost dwells in my heart!* He is there, a Powerful Protector, always ready to defend me against my enemies, to sustain me in my combats, to assure me the victory. A Faithful Friend, He is always disposed to give me a hearing, and, far from being a source of sadness and weariness, His conversation brings gladness and joy; it "hath no bitterness nor His company any tediousness, but joy and gladness."[15] He is there the ever present witness of my efforts and sacrifices, counting every one of my steps in order to reward them some day, following my whole course, forgetful of nothing that I do for His love and His glory.

The Holy Spirit dwells in my heart! I am His temple, essentially the temple of holiness; I must, therefore, sanctify myself, since the first characteristic of God's house is holiness: "Holiness becometh Thy house, O Lord, unto length of days."[16] I will, therefore, proclaim again with the Psalmist, more by my conduct than by my words: "I have loved, O Lord, the beauty of Thy house, and the place where Thy glory dwelleth."[17]

What is more efficacious than these reflections, to move us to live according to the word of St. Paul: "That you may walk worthy of God, in all things pleasing; being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God."[18] Let us labor, therefore, thus to grow in the knowledge of God, applying ourselves every day to understand better the Divine favors lavished upon us, in order to appreciate them the more. Let us love, honor, and often invoke the Holy Ghost; let us be docile to His inspirations; and determined

[15] Wisdom viii. 16.
[16] Psalm xcii. 5.
[17] Psalm xxv. 8.
[18] Colossians i. 10.

finally to occupy the throne of glory which is prepared for us in heaven, let us commence by glorifying here below in our body and in our soul that Holy Trinity Whose abiding place and temple we are: "For you are bought with a great price. Glorify and bear God in your body." [19]

[19] 1 Corinthians vi. 20.



BQT 1215 .F7 SMC

Froget, Bathilemy.

The indwelling of the
Holy Spirit in the
AKA-7570 (ab)